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BLACKBURN CHARACTERS.

Yours faithfully
W. A. Abram

Permanent Portrait, by Mr. Leslie Shawcross, Blackburn.

Unto this last.

Blackburn Characters

OF A

Past Generation

BY

WILLIAM ALEXANDER ABRAM,

Historian of Blackburn: Antiquary of Lancashire.

BROUGHT TO PRESS BY HIS SON,

With a Memoir

BY A FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR.

"'Tide life, 'tide death, I come without delay."

. . . . . .

"——— and death unloads thee."

Blackburn.

1894.

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CONTENTS.

	Page
In Dedication	—
A Memoir	—
"Jack" Salisbury, Auctioneer and Humorist	1-13
George Dewhurst, Reedmaker and Radical	14-33
"Dicky" Dugdale, Soldier, Engraver, and Poet	34-44
"Harry" Baker, Tailor, Newsman, and Socialist	45-56
Peter Ellingthorp, Gentleman, and Guardians' Clerk	57-71
"Harry" Stowe, Butcher, and Amateur Actor	72-82
James Brogden, Income Tax Commissioners' Clerk	83-95
Dr. Skaife, Surgeon, "Bookworm," & Ornithologist (With Portrait, page 106.)	96-109
"Tom" Clough, Attorney and Musician	110-122
Thomas Butterfield, Postmaster	123-133
"Dicky" Hacking, Master Mason and Quarrymaster	134-158
"Tom" Mullineaux, Butcher and Councilman	159-171
"Jack" Smith, Quarrymaster and Mayor (With Portrait, page 173.)	174-195
"Jemmy" Cunningham, Butcher, Brewer, and Mayor	196-206
"Charlie" Tiplady, Printer and Alderman	207-218

PAGE

William Billington, Operative and Poet..... 219-233

James Boyle, Confectioner and Alderman..... 234-257
(With Portrait, page 240.)

Dr. James Barlow, Surgeon..... 258-267

George Ellis, Musician..... 269-280
(With an Engraving, page 268.)

Dr. Henry Ainsworth Grime, Surgeon..... 281-294
(With Portrait, page 281.)

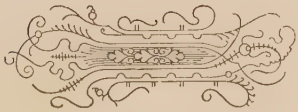
Richard Edmundson, Gentleman.... 297-313
(With Portrait, page 296.)

"Will" Durham, Tinman, Annalist and Poor Law Guardian..... 314-326

"Jack" Baron, Operative and Poet..... 327-338

Miles Baron, Staymaker, Alderman, and Poor Law Guardian..... 339-353

John Osbaldeston, Weaver and Inventor..... 355-369
(With an Engraving, page 354.)



PAGE

William Billington, Operative and Poet..... 219-233

James Boyle, Confectioner and Alderman..... 234-257
(With Portrait, page 240.)

Dr. James Barlow, Surgeon..... 258-267

George Ellis, Musician..... 269-280
(With an Engraving, page 268.)

Dr. Henry Ainsworth Grime, Surgeon..... 281-294
(With Portrait, page 281.)

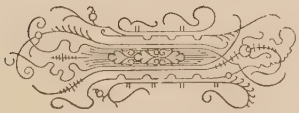
Richard Edmundson, Gentleman.... 297-313
(With Portrait, page 296.)

"Will" Durham, Tinman, Annalist and Poor Law Guardian..... 314-326

"Jack" Baron, Operative and Poet..... 327-338

Miles Baron, Staymaker, Alderman, and Poor Law Guardian..... 339-353

John Osbaldeston, Weaver and Inventor..... 355-369
(With an Engraving, page 354.)



What Small Service

in this Book,

To my Father.

THE HAND that never failed its task, even in the last hour, had yet to lose touch with these pages—outcome of many memories. Past Generations were to him as raised letters to the blind: as familiar. Yet the Centuries grow faint and veiled; encrusted and faded. So, perhaps, in the supreme moment of Departure, the spirit of this little book —his last—grew dim also; or hazed; lost sight of in the Passing. Pain is a great artist, but Death alone gives true perspective.

If these pages of Old Blackburn beckoned to him at all in the last fight he fought—and he fought so many—it must

have been the meaner blow to him that his Book should be unended; of all things—in his life—a Book. He loved Books. Not, by that, his own—though in these he took the pardonable pride—but the Books of all men. The paper-knife was the next friend to the pen; in many ways the kindlier; more generous, unexacting. I can fancy, at least, in the cruel moment of breath-battle, a thought for his book came like a flash of fire in gloom. It would not be his hopefulness to see, in that moment, his book other than a mere waste of ill-completed pages; with a brave beginning, yet no end; the one thing, in life, undone. Those who write, and endure in the travail of writing, will comprehend the keenness of such surrender in the conflict of Matter with Mind.

In those Silent Lands where the dead lie—peopled like sleeping cities—it is the warm way for those of closer Love and

Service, to carve the few words of epitaph upon stone. The simple words, the Saxon words my father revered and used so often, are best. They are fraught with the simplicity of strength for the Saxon tongue is bell-clapper to the heart. They sing to the solemn cadence of the voice, their monosyllabic splendour enshrouding the Dead. You may cast your phrases into Latins and your Latins into metals, but the Bell is speechless in the Belfry, for the scholar has not come. Not so with the humaner Language spoken in all English Homes.

It seems to me that this Book—born after death—is the fittest stone for my father's memory; wherein I also please him most by completing the one incompletion; accomplishing the one inaccomplishment. Yet, even here, there was so little to be

done. The hard work was over; the long searching to learn that our grandfathers had ancestors; the clear comprehension of the curious, the quaint; the data more dear than the cheque of commerce; the eager foot down the by-lanes of lore—lanes overgrown by grass yet uneasy to the feet, being rugged with the Ruts of Ages and strewn by the Stones of Time. It is solitary and sad to take a stroll in the Past—ambitions and reprisals, agonies and revenges, to be read in every ruined wall; found, half buried, beneath leaves in the greenwood. History is but turf, making the years grow grass. Yet these by-lanes, leading, as they do, to the battle-plains of our Country—often unawares—were his delight; he loved to stride them with his quick, spasmodic step; to peer into their hedgerows for fact or fancy, with swift

rejecting or accepting eyes; his face full of an anxiety to find. The Dead Generations speak more clearly than the Living; their words and deeds fuller of speech than Silence is. Our day is a shout, noising the hours. Yet, though the by-lanes of History are so sparsely peopled you may walk at will, without fear of trespass or the Gamekeeper, you may meet many men garnering the same ground. This half-wild and wholly old-fashioned 'garden of family history' (a figure in one of my father's lectures) was to him more fruitful and fanciful than the sedate parterres and select preserves of present life. A genealogical gardener, he cared more for the oak, with its antler branches, than for the sprig with its hot-house air.

Elsewhere, in this book, one who knew

him these considerable years, has set forth a little of the story—the strenuous story—of my father's life; of his part in the town; his spokesmanship for Progress; his engraven, nay, his engrained love of Lancashire; his steadfast purpose in Politics, when these seemed sincerer, simpler, than To-Day; his accuracy as Archæologist; his honesty as Historian. He cared little for recognition, being, I have thought, an unwisely modest man; or, it may be, he took the larger, the more laughing view of Fame. It was an out-spoken happiness to serve the town; to tend its growth; to mark its march in manufacture; to signal of danger—fearful lest retrogression ran to rout. His was a fighting but not an ensanguined temperament, a temperament anticipating, in the very onrush and aspect

of victory, the pain, the discomfiture of defeat.

Those Longer Lanes—fuller of mystery than the dawns of summer mornings, sadder than the twilights grey—engage him now. If I could set out—so to return—upon that swift Journey, it would be to give him the assurance of this little volume; to take the parting denied—by Time and Distance—to me. I think I should find him upon some hill-top, his eager soul having hasted thither the sooner to see that crystal Country—closed to our eyes; comprehending its calm; marvelling, perhaps, at its absence of shadow; at the utter gentleness of its Sun. It was his impetuosity on Earth to gain the moorlands and the mountains, that the levels

and the wide lands might speak their message in one melody; he would walk miles to see the set of Sun; stand indefinite hours to watch that Message of the Eternal—the quivering, quick-changing evening glory, his gaze upon those caverns of colour: the great Given Picture to the World. But I know no foot of mine could overtake him—by Nature, and in spirit, a quick walker; no sympathy, no strategy could bring us face to face that this loving labour might call the flush of accomplishment to his cheek, the happy hour to his eye. If these things, and thoughts of ours, be known to the glad and dead it must be their ear that can hear without our telling, their eye that can see. For we can no more look steadily at Death than at the Sun.

And so, with my father's pen—the pen that never fell from his grasp, but was straightway laid down that he might grapple Death with both hands—and, in lesser way, with the pen of his father before him, I came to carve the few words of epitaph upon stone. Life is the stone; Thought is en-chiselled. The Mind is a mallet striking; there are so many stratas. Yet, I think, he was of the grit—the millstone grit—of his own dear County; neither crumbling shale, nor unemotioned granite; nor of the shining marl that breaks with weather. The figure I have stolen to use, being no sculptor, of the Epitaph and the Stone, is so true after all. The white paper is the stone of the writer, and to design and be chaste in the choice of words is a very carving, for words are tools twice-edged.

There are those that sing the Songs of the Sword—but they write them with the Pen. The Sword hangs by the left side of families for Generations, but the Pen is ever in the right hand; The Sword in its sheath sleeps; the Pen knows no comfort save the work-a-day wear. His Pen was kind to friends, and a fear to foes; yet it was just, even in these; it sprang to his will even in the latter-days; it was never guilty—that I know—of the dishonest stroke; it pricked no man in ambuscade; it wielded Cromwellian warfare, impelled by the religion of Conviction.

To him, therefore, what Small Service, of mine, in this Book, that comes—a shadowed child—into the World; yet, I trust, unconscious of its lack, save for that one last Chapter never to be written. A

little while, and the need of other hands than mine will, I hope, be apparent; the imperfections mine; the perfect pages his. He loved Literature and taught others to love it; his skill in the Past made him the magician of these moorlands; he carried the significant flag of an arduous Life. He died, one might say, standing; not a Retreat but a March. And, though I could say more of this, I must cease, for there are times when one cannot see—for tears.

Edmund William Abram.

WILLIAM ALEXANDER ABRAM

Born, 18th January, 1835: Died, 2nd May, 1894.

TO focus the many phases of Mr. Abram's life into a brief Memoir would be a difficult task for an accomplished biographer. He was a many-sided man, and yet he may be said to have maintained a simplicity, a singleness of side, in the public view. He was earnest; he was honest; he spoke what he felt; wrote what he thought. During twenty years he changed not at all. I say this, notwithstanding the political breach,—chasm, almost—that widened between the intellectual Liberalism of his political Manhood and Middle Age, and the more Conservative tendencies of his latter days. It was, perhaps, because he did not change that he found himself, ultimately, in the opposite camp, friend, staunch ally at last of the whilom political foe. Time changed; politics changed; Mr. Abram's individuality mastered its influences; he did what all must do in like circumstance: he adjusted himself to his environment. It was more difficult for him to adapt himself than for many; the effort caused him pain; he was born to lead politically, rather than to be led; his Nature sounded war at once if an attempt were made to coerce his convictions.

He could hardly be described as an exponent of Compromise, though there were times—in trade dispute, for instance—when he demonstrated a skill, a tact, that suggested possibilities of statesmanship. But, throughout his life, Mr. Abram's salient simplicity of character was known and understood by the people of Blackburn, a man of impetus, and heat upon occasion ; one, tending to sternness in the very earnestness of his resolution ; one impatient of lagging in others, being unable to understand it in a World, the key-note to which was : Work. In many ways, in practical sympathy with the sacredness of labour, he illustrated Carlyle's fine passages on Toil. This being the core of Mr. Abram's career ; the one appealing at once,—by recognition—to those who knew him, I am a little dismayed by the side-lights to be presented, fearing a confusion, or a blurred picture. The essay at biography is made more difficult by reason of the recent death of Mr. Abram ; there has not yet been time to weigh the various elements in his character ; to arrive at their correct proportion. I go back to his boyhood to find him veritably Father of the Man ; with the same super-sensitiveness of Nature ; the fondness of books and of the open Country ; the unflinching attitude toward a task. In his Young Manhood I come upon verses of distinction and definiteness of expression, suggestive of skill rather than of inspiration ; the polish rather than the poetic spontaneity of phrase. He forsook Verse in his maturer years, and came to take his Poetry with a smile, as many men do. Yet this versification was remarkable insomuch that it was the first utterance of a man who had to devote a lifetime to the service of Prose ; and of interest seeing that his limited leisure was so spent, while the full day occupied him as a setter together of the Thoughts of other men. On Christmas Eve, 1858, he sat,

in his somewhat lofty and quite solitary room in London, and wrote:

> "And *now*—I sit, within the surge
> Of a vast city, yet alone;
> No friendly foot upon the verge
> Of Christmas standeth near me—none."

This little poem was autobiographical of various Christmas Eves; those the more prominent in his memory. The quatrain of lines I have quoted, strikes a note one expects from a lad of home instincts and sensitive moods. Yet, remembering the numerous, the nigh numberless friends Mr. Abram never counted but knew well these latter years, the correspondences, the confidences from so many parts of England, it seems a little strange to hear this early plaint of pathos, to sympathise with such sense of forlornness. Some men merge out of Poesy into Prose; others burst from Prose into Poetry. Mr. Abram, having been tantalized by the shadow, found the substance; the solid substance of archæological Fact, historical Truth. Growing more and more fond of books, there came the time when Mr. Abram found himself Librarian, with the Free Library in its teething stages, ere yet full upon its legs. A story came to me, the other day, that will serve to illustrate, by a few swift touches, Mr. Abram's responsiveness to books and to the boyish heart that hankers after them; a tenderness at once for Literature and for Humanity. Long ago, when the future Historian of Blackburn was busy with the books of other men, there came a bright-eyed factory-lad to the Library, eager to borrow. It was in the early days of the Free Library, and Mr. Abram had known what it was in his own boyhood to hanker after books, without the wherewithal to obtain them by commerce or by kindness. The factory-

lad got his volume ; it was one of travel, perhaps ; something glowing and oriental for a lad's eyes after the monotony of the mill. The lad sat long, reading ; longer than he ought, no doubt; the candles grew less; the cat was on the Hearth ; the Mother and sisters had gone to bed. The son,—successor to a dead father,—had a few privileges, as bread-winner. He was quite a young lad, the chief means of comfort to the others, with a book as pleasure at the end of the long day. Tired out, or full of travelled fancies, he too went to bed. The book was left open ; a wide-mouthed ink-bottle upon the table. Presently the cat was no longer upon the Hearth ; next morning a broad blot upon the pages : we know the rest. It was no easy thing for this lad to face the stern Librarian with his searching eyes and ringing voice ; the ready resort of recompense was not to hand ; there was not a silver sixpence in the little home. Yet, somewhere, a collection of old coins, and out of these the boy chose an American silver dime. It shone, and the others were dull metal. Armed with this, the boy went to the Librarian, whose brows gathered to see such an effacement of the precious pages of a public book. The words of admonishment began to beat upon the boy—always it was a crime, in Mr. Abram's eyes, to ill-use a book, to cut its edges indifferently, to lay it upon its face—to bend the pages back an enormity indeed. This was a valued book, one necessary to the Library. What had the boy been doing ? The Committee (and the Librarian) were most particular about the books ; he "would be fined sixpence in addition to the warning." The Librarian's countenance looked set and very stern. At this moment a chord was struck quite distinct from all this care of an inanimate thing. "I have not got a sixpence," said the lad, "but here"—

fumbling in his waistcoat pocket—"is a silver coin. Will this do? There isn't a sixpence at home." The lad pulled out the American silver dime. "My boy," said the Librarian, "I will take the dime," and, by and by, the one drew out the other's story; the intelligent factory-lad had found a friend only too willing to advise him in his reading, and the remembrance of that boy—now grown grey—is of the Librarian's hand resting upon his head. Years afterwards, they met again. Time had told its tale upon both; yet—though they became close friends—the incident was never recalled. The boy remembered; perhaps the Librarian remembered but shrank from calling up the hard Past. His seven years as Librarian may be described as the transitional period in Mr. Abram's career, in which he became more and more wedded to letters, in which he wielded, with increasing fluency and facility, his pen. Writing for the local newspapers, day by day associating with books, might be defined as Effect and Cause, given the natural disposition and desire to write. Those seven years gave him time to make his choice among the literary diversities, and he chose, undoubtedly, the subjects most suited to his temperament and ability: History and the accumulation and adjustment of Facts. He found time to study many allied interests; Architecture, of which he was passionately fond, and a judge, being able to name you the minutiæ of the ornatest Gothic; the ornament, the extravagance, the excrescence, even; Gothic his favourite, no doubt, though his love of the old made even the tone of his voice change to a reverent resonance in presence of the Norman or Saxon. If the Chevron claimed him he became enthusiastic Norman, but another mile would make him stand to appraise to you, at its proper value, the Saxon

Herring-bone. A handsome church stirred him to a passion of praise that might have shocked his Nonconformist ancestors; an Old Hall—Elizabethan by preference—attracted him by very instinct; he would dwell upon the charm of mullioned windows, yet confess to be a little undecided as to whether the high-pitched house of Tudor Times—wood and plaster—was not the more pictorial, the more cheery in the landscape. He disliked anything new, it repelled him; he was no inconoclast; he would not even permit the removal of a dandelion from his garden. It was a trouble to him to see an old Manor House fall into decay, yet—once a ruin—the poetical aspect of the scene appeased him; other fancies were at play; the ivy upon the springing arch, the broken vaulting—open sky above—the eloquence of Ruin, the part once played in History, atoned for the imperfect walls, the fallen roof-tree, the unpeopled rooms. He had visited most of, if not all, the abbeys of England; the majority of the cathedrals and minsters. Not long ago he mounted the great Tower of Lincoln Minster, and, gazing over the dreamy fen land, quoted line upon line of Tennyson, in proof of his assertion that Tennyson's temperament was, in a way, the temperament of Tennyson's native County, a harvest land of strange gleams, of sad lights and shadows. For thirty years he had gone hither and thither, prospecting the architectural or the old; "opening up a new country," was his term. He could tell you the length of any one of the more prominent cathedrals, at hap-hazard. A Nonconformist, by birth and by training, he knew more of the ecclesiastic and historic aspects of the Church of England than most Churchmen, he could set most Denominations right upon their Dissent. While—in this broad Impression of the man—I

am upon his pleasures, I must mention his elocutionary faculty, his love of reading aloud. He read publicly for many years, but his nervousness tended to a little mar the *timbre* of his voice; it was in the small circle that his gift was at its greatest, his voice echoing and ringing, a music set to words. Page after page of Tennyson, of Wordsworth, of Byron, he would read with a singular impressivity of manner, a haunting intonation, a break in his voice at the emotion of the lines. He never read Browning aloud; of Swinburne—his mastery of rhythm—he was particularly fond, the poet suited his own cadence; Arnold was not so accustomed; for variety the Elizabethans were called upon, or the Cavalier poets; Tennyson and Wordsworth were the familiar; Byron in early manhood. Mr. Abram was versed in all the poets, those I have indicated were for public worship, public reading. Yet the mainspring of pleasure was the broad Country, an expedition to new pastures, a well-worn walk in the old. Gardening, too, was recreation, though in an old fashioned, left-handed way. Mr. Abram was a little left-handed, he gripped his stick in that hand; his right well-practiced in writing, his left handy by a sort of instinct. If a man ever knew Lancashire, historically and topographically, Mr Abram did. He had "tramped" the County – his own ungarnished word—from Rivington Pike to Coniston Old Man; from the flats of Fylde to the wild moors on the Eastern boundary; he had climbed all ridges from Bleasdale to Blackstone Edge. His familiar knowledge with the contours and complexities of hills was of great use to others upon like expeditions. It was his pride, while on the deck of a Windermere Lake steamer, to be able to name every peak, pike, shoulder—east and west. New found

friends in the Lake District were generally Americans, they wanted the man who could put them "straight through;" here was the man; a man who knew the names of places, of mountains, of moors; an enthusiast of his own land—the "Old Country"—one determined to make others see with his eyes. They saw with his eyes, often through his glasses, gazing upon mountains face to face,—mountains of which they had read in Wordsworth, and panted—an American thirst—to see. His quick-flowing language and the sweep of his arm were at once a shout and a semaphore to the Landscape; he took good care you missed nothing if you went with him. You might be footsore but he made you trudge on; a point to be gained, a view gathered. He would walk on a little ahead so that you felt bound to follow. A few paces in front and his mind at work kept him happy; he was made anxious at once if he turned to find you panting. He became contrite and endeavoured to adapt his pace to yours; it was with the greatest difficulty, a perfect bodily task; his mind willing but his feet utterly disobedient; the repression called forth all his concentration. He would encourage you by limiting the distance, by promising that the retreat should be sounded, "just at that crag, certain the view must be there." Until latterly, he would never confess to fatigue, though obviously tired. Or he would essay a Short Cut of his own geographical invention. There were times when these Short Cuts took you miles round, yet his accuracy in stray tracks and bridle-paths was to be trusted. If mistaken, he felt anxious for his reputation as cicerone, and showed it, drew a score of yards ahead as if his walking would lessen your distance. In this way he gained his acquaintance with the face of the County, its features, its fine points. A good guide in

person, he was not good at direction; he over-elaborated, went into too much detail; drew you a rough map with the ready pencil on a worn envelope; was astonished, a little annoyed, if you failed to comprehend, forgetting that he could see the more plainly.

I have indicated a few of his side-lights, clear windows all of them rather than stained glass: his could not be classed a complex Nature. We have regarded him as Versifier—he would not have claimed Poet—as Librarian, as Lover of the Open, as Topographer, as Reader of other men's rhymes. There still remain many facets. As a Speaker, Mr. Abram was—for long years—prominent on platforms; his style scholarly and then popular, not bookish, yet full of the choicer words; he did not sway an audience this way and that, his method was direct, his aim single. He awoke people to enthusiasm if need be, or he made them laugh in a good humour. To the end of his life he was nervous in speaking; this was strange in one of lifetime practice; his nervousness never interfered with his utterance; few know of it. At a crowded and turbulent political meeting he could quell an uproar with the resonant severity, the masterful passion of his voice, apparently the calmest man on the platform, the pallor of his face the only indication of a terribly excitable temperament. A man once shouted to him to "speak up." Mr. Abram was upon his feet speaking to a Vote of Confidence in the then Government. "That man will wish me dumb before I have done." The retort rang in loudest tones to the end of the hall. He would step to the front to break in upon clamour, so that other speakers might have fair or favourable hearing. He spoke rapidly, without notes, without committal to memory, never slowly, except in the opening sentences; nigh two hundred words

a minute was the record of a reporter. Once, in his life, he followed the reputably wise course and stored his speech in memory. He forgot it entirely, had to make a new speech "off the stick-end;" on the spur of the moment, *extempore.* If Mr. Abram had spoken slowly he would have been more than a telling speaker; as it was, his impetuosity, his clear-cut convictions, won; he carried the crowd by these, and by the well-chosen straight-striking sentences—not by the glamour of his oratory. His speeches told. The Lancashire people have an expressive phrase at such times—"Give it 'em hot." This was a better plaudit to him than cheers, he paused at the word, passed his hand across his forehead, returned, re-doubled to the charge. He was, singularly, the more nervous if any of those related to him happened to be in the Hall, haunted by the idea of their discomfiture should he break down; he begged of them—at exciting times—not to go; the fancy was real to him, it never became fact. The more strenuous the moment the more effective his speech; he was pleased, afterwards, if his people had heard. Rapid words, rapid thoughts—the earnest expression of a man who had weighed his position before hand, a swift gift of sarcasm, a born fighter—with his back to the wall—a sledge-hammer for an unmannerly attack, something compelling conviction in others if roused to gesture and the full utterance that came with self-forgetfulness—these were the characteristics of Mr. Abram as a political Speaker and Controversialist.

As Lecturer he was in happier mood. His pleasure was more manifest; he carefully wrote out his lecture and then read it aloud, but with animation, not being tied to the Manuscript. He could read his own nervous and singular caligraphy in a bad light, yet his writing was a puzzle to the stranger, being very close, on large sheets, every "i" dotted

and "t" crossed, the terminals a mere wave line. Once accustomed, you could read it with ease; yet many a poor printer knew misery in his first hours on "Copy." Mr. Abram's lectures were upon his beloved Lancashire; the poet Spenser's association with Hurstwood, by Burnley; Local Place and Surnames; The Literature of the Lakes; The Witchcraft and Superstition of North East-Lancashire; The Study of Family History; Cromwell in Lancashire Of the Protector he was a passionate admirer, vindicator. The elements of Cromwell's character appealed to Mr. Abram's conception of a man; the vigour; the resolution; the unbending will; the remarkable skill in war; the sombre religious bent; the faith in himself; the ability to do, to dare. It was of interest to Mr. Abram to watch the re-adjustment in the Nation's attitude toward Cromwell; no man would have been more gratified to learn of the movement to include Cromwell's statue among those of England's Rulers; for a lifetime, Mr. Abram upheld the Protector; glowed and grew enthusiastic of him; there was Puritan blood in Mr. Abram's own veins; culture and thought tended to widen his impulses, but he remained a staunch believer in the graver, the simpler, the circumspect, to the end. Glad of conversation, of company, he endured rather than enjoyed the conventionalities of Custom; caring nothing for Society without sincerity. I go back for a few final words on the lectures. Mr. Abram never refused a request, if his health in the winter time permitted. He was equally willing: Historic Society or the Sunday School Class; his reward in an interested audience, though small. The lectures cost him time; they had to be prepared in the press of other work; they were generally given in winter, when the weather was bad. Yet he never failed, that his family remember, to

fulfil a lecture, once promised; though there were times when he finished the revision of his Manuscript within the last moment; barely time to catch his train, at the run.

The full force of Mr. Abram's persistence and patience was thrown into his historical work. Hour after hour, he would search through obscure Parish Registers for a single entry—a paradox in an impatient man. Mr. Abram was impatient of all tardiness, all inefficiency, all "trimming"—as they say in Lancashire. Yet, for the old, the indistinct, he had a marvellous willingness, setting together the dim words again and again in order to obtain their meaning, their correct relation. Copying the Ancient Guild Rolls, at Preston, Mr. Abram worked with a microscope to trace the last vestiges of many names. In studying old documents he used a magnifier and powerful acids to call freshness to the faded page; brightness to the ink. He never grew impatient with things ancient; his temperament adjusted itself to Time; further back in the Centuries and he became almost leisurely in his research, walking slowly as a man does who knows the distance and is sure of the way. His *History of Blackburn*, was the work of years, a pyramid of labour. He calculated seven years spent in the preparation and completion of that work. Printed at a local office, the progress was slow; the proofs an unending labour; Mr. Abram's method may be thus briefly described: Every fact must be verified; every inscription, deed, parish entry copied at first hand; there was so little evidence of the History of Blackburn; it was almost virgin soil, all to be cleared, delved, cultivated. Mr. Abram inspected every document, every paper, he could obtain a glimpse at; copied them himself in a sort of abbreviated long-hand; took his bricks and mortar home, therewith to begin building his

Book. Every old Hall was ransacked; every tradition traced; families pieced together—in fragments for Generations. Fortunately, for the Author, Cromwell had marched his soldiers through this corner of Lancashire; Mr. Abram seized upon the graphic element; studied the battle-ground, the despatches, Cromwell's letters; the letters of the Generals of both sides; endless facility in this regard was granted; no man ever more encouraged in his antiquarian labour. In the result, Mr. Abram's description of the battle of Preston and Walton, and the circumstances which led to it ["the affair was so momentous, one of the most critical in all these wars," said Carlyle]; of the consequences of victory, of the aspect of defeat, is considered a masterpiece of effective narrative inter-woven with facts. No tampering with History was permitted; facts were sacred as well as stubborn things; a writer suggested to Mr. Abram the basis of a romantico-historical novel, in which dates were ill-treated and the chief actors made to play the necessities of the Picturesque. He would have none of it; could not tolerate the malformation of History; he held accuracy above all; he did not admire, he could not condone, the liberties taken by Scott. Imperfect History gave people imperfect Knowledge; historical novels, imaginatively treated—in direct betrayal of the facts—were pernicious, tending to confusion. There was enough in History for the writer of the Romantic, the interesting, without placing the chief actors as if they were pawns.

Having harvested History he would spend long hours in his Study, winnowing the chaff from the grain. It was interesting to see him at work; he wrote in the elder literary fashion, with a board upon his knee, seated in an arm-chair. He could not write with his usual facility at a desk; the

alteration hampered him; it seemed as if the mechanism disliked disturbance. With one knee upon the other, writing pad firmly upheld by both, nervous fingers cramped, his hand worked its way across the paper with surprising swiftness, the pen uplifted and poised, now and again, in wait for the suited word. At such moment the pen took an angle, nib forward, or spent its spare time in dotting "i's" and crossing "t's" half-consciously. Mr. Abram would then peer above his glasses; straight at his crowded book-shelves; seeing nothing; the blindness of the Thinker to the external. All his literary articles, his leading articles, his lectures, his historical works were written in this fashion—pad upon knee; quarto paper falling, slip by slip completed, to the floor. I think such attitude, in writing, physiologically wrong; the whole figure becomes bent—head, shoulders, back sacrificed; it affected Mr. Abram in his walk—half a working life-time spent at one tension of muscles, one fixation of limbs. These bodily idiosyncrasies stamp themselves more upon a man than all the years of thought. People said—of late years—that Mr. Abram aged rapidly; it was quite true, yet it was owing as much to the physical endurances he set himself as to the intellectual strain. He was a man who made life hard for himself; he would walk so long that there was breath in his body; he even endeavoured to conquer Death by walking, by action, movement. With the means and the facilities of considerable ease for many years, he kept to the arduous habits of his Youth and Middle Age; would post his own letters by preference; fulfil the Daily Duty; write his accustomed limit; walked the mile that seemed unnecessary to others. In the end, his temperament mastered himself as it had mastered all the tasks of his life. He could not

help his speed ; he admitted it ; his brain went at that speed and all the rest of the man had to hurry—breathless, no matter—to keep pace. Now and then there came a lull, a calm—in the midst of another man's book. To see him reading was to see him in the only real rest he ever knew. I go back to his Study, for a moment, to see upon its central desk a mass of papers ; History lying about in heaps ; piles of books brought down from the shelves for immediate use ; great folio volumes around his feet ; on chairs adjacent ; he making quick darts of reference to one or other, half impatient to lift the pen, yet wholly determined to verify. His Library, in those days, was no well-ordered place in fine leathers and light oaks,—not a book un-adjusted. Rather it seemed a sort of intellectual crucible ; Mr. Abram the Alchemist, throwing all sorts of things into the pot ; a whole mass of dead matter simmering down into succinct and intelligible History. He was so busy putting the Ages in order—his whole faculty of Facts at full work,—it seemed as if his own papers were a little beyond him ; they tantalized him, tormented him ; he knew where they were but "could not lay his hands upon them"—having been drained of their honey, they delighted to deceive him, "vacant chaff" ill "meant for grain." He would look for his glasses, to find them upon his forehead ; his vast memory—encyclopædic—played him odd tricks in little things. No clock ticked in the room ; no sound was permitted ; to be interrupted in an article was a punishment ; strangers must have had a queer impression of Mr. Abram, if they first met him in his Den. The books in line to the ceiling, dusty and musty ; an aroma of leather bindings ; the Historian amid his piled up papers ; the one vacant Visitor's Chair, to be gained by a Pilgrim's Progress over tomes.

He cherished pictures and understood them ; in many ways a judge of these, as of books. Pictures represented the brighter side of Life, as books the more serious ; they his pleasure, books his work. His association with the Art Gallery of the Free Library led him to study Art in the public interest,—that a choice might be made. But, long before this, during his life in London, he had spent happy hours in the Art Galleries, especially the National—being fond of the Old Masters ; his preferences—after these—for Landscape, in water colour, and Historical, in oil. Of many architectural peculiarities in old Manor Houses he made sketches, having a modest talent with the pencil ; nothing to equal the fine work of his brother, Mr. George Abram, a talented German scholar, a student and a recluse, by way of contrast to Mr. William Abram, student and a man of public matters. The latter's love of Church music made him fond of the English Ritual ; he had a critical sense, though theoretically knowing nothing of music ; he "could start a tune"—as they say in Scotland—as well as most, particularly in the country when Summer parties sang in the Eventide. His tenor voice, in the earlier days, was well heard in hymn or anthem ; he never attempted any music of lighter mood ; his ear was good, and the ringing notes he had helped to strengthen and encourage those vocally more timid.

As a Public Man in the affairs of the town he was multifariously busy, throughout his life. No man in Blackburn—at the time of Mr. Abram's death—could be said to have been so associated with municipal development In reading letters, written by Mr. Abram in the late 'Sixties, I find him speaking of the full-ordered day ; of the pressure of engagements ; an echo to the very expressions of Yesterday ; still

the "pressure," still the "limited time at disposal," still the wish that "matters might become a little more moderate in their demand," a wish that sounds with a humour and a pathos at once, remembering the writer's temperament, his passion for work; his capacity of unrest. At twenty-five years of age he was organising the Free Library—Secretary and Librarian; collecting subscriptions to found the cultured and comprehensive Institution, now such an advantage to Blackburn. Those times knew little of the Free Library Movement; captious days that deprecated reading, at a loss to understand wherein the benefit lay. The promoters of the Free Library had no small opposition to face and fight; support was meagre; the thing taxed even Mr. Abram's indomitable energy. I quote from one, associated with the Movement, who, in dwelling upon the issue of Mr. Abram's first catalogue, in 1862, said: "And here a word on behalf of one who has done much for this Movement. If Mr. Abram had not been induced to become the Librarian we should have had no Free Library. It was principally his own persevering energy and tact, combined with practical knowledge, that enabled the few men who, through good report and evil report, have worked together to bring about its present success. He is the right man in the right place; and the catalogue which has been issued, is a proof of his talent and skill." This was in 1862. Thirty-two years later, on the night of May 2nd, 1894—when the Last Call came—Mr. Abram was at work for the Library; catalogues and books upon his knees. It is, surely, more than passing strange that as his career, publicly, municipally, opened with the Library, so it closed. In the interval—much happening; much achievement; many anxieties; many accomplishments. For more than a quarter of a Century Mr. Abram was connected

with the Institution, after his seven probationary years as Librarian had been completed. During these twenty-seven years his zeal and interest were as keen in the voluntary service as in the professional period, and the last work he ever did,—a bare hour ere Death struck him down—was upon another Library catalogue—the list of pictures for the Art Exhibition to be held in honour of the New Wing. It was a problem to him, at times in the last winter, whether he would ever see the Wing completed ; at Easter he took one he knew well, to look at it ; often he stood in the street to watch its progression ; anxious to see this fulfilment ; this development of the bright side—the picture side—of the Institution he had loved so long—child of his effort, now grown tall. For several hours, the last night, he sat in the constrained way, of which I have before spoken, until the heavy volumes became burthensome ; until, it seemed, that he had, by this means, closed the channels of breath. So much dawned with that first public prominence—his closer relationship with books, his journalistic opportunity ; his progression into Man of Letters—between the 'Sixties and the 'Nineties much had been compressed and crowded. During these thirty and more years he was in the Municipal Movement ; the later phases as well as the earlier ; even the events of To-Day knew his influence ; he spoke at the inaugural meeting of Lifeboat Saturday ; he revived interest—long dead—in John Osbaldeston, inventor of the weft fork ; he was at the foundation-stone laying of Miss Derbyshire's pretty alms-houses, not quite a month before he died. It was of the Town's thanks to Miss Derbyshire he wished to speak ; all were in the open ; he spoke, with uncovered head, in the rain. A few noted his difficult breath, the effort to speak, the slight hesitancy ; he was very

punctilious in matters of public speaking, in the etiquette of precedence; the Donor's name came first; his white hair,—at the temples—was not the best protective; he felt the Elements but had not finished his speech—"You will excuse me if I wear my hat?" He concluded his appreciative phrases. It was the last time he ever spoke in the open air. His courtesy was old-fashioned—deferential to ladies; he paid pretty compliments, never admitting that gallantry to women was a little antique. In public matters he could not be spoken of as an accommodating man; his manner stiffened; he was a controversialist, not from choice but of a necessity; so many things seemed to demand contradiction. He never went to a ball in his life; could not dance; could not understand that Middle Age had prerogatives; insular, he could not bear to feel isolated—a strange contradiction.

For twelve years he was upon the School Board, having to do with its organisation, being a member of the first Board. His knowledge of Education was of advantage in the Board's dealings with the Department; he was the spokesman of deputations; compiled statistics; was active in the advancement of school conditions; once a great believer in Compulsory Education he had latterly modified his views—not so optimistic of the gain, after all. In 1880 he was in the Council Chamber, a representative of St. Paul's Ward. He was in the Council several years; came at once to the front; was upon the Parliamentary and other important Committees; again a spokesman, if need be; a busy time in the Council, with the great Water Scheme and many other of Mr. Bryan's engineering enterprises to be accomplished.

Ultimately, the numerous Committees of the Council made too many demands upon his time; he retired—never having had to fight for his seat, his elections as Councillor being

unopposed by the Conservative Party. Mr. Abram was proud of his association with the Council during some of its more active years; years when the best brains were at work in service of the Town. Passing out of School Board, and Council, still found him the willing horse for new loads; he became a Life Governor of the Infirmary; went the round of duties; visited the wards; attended the Board meetings; greatly interested in so excellent an Institution; a member of the Board at the time of his death. In those cataclysms that periodically shake the Cotton Industry—revealing to the outer World the pertinacity, the grit, the capacity of endurance in the Lancashire character—Mr. Abram played a mediator's part. He was between two stools, but—proverb to the contrary—he did not fall. Rather, he stood upon both, making them the piers to his position. That position was—especially in the sad and stricken Strike of 1878—difficult. A powerful exponent of all that was free and fair, he was at the same time Editor of the popular local newspaper; the operatives looked to the paper to vindicate their Cause; the employers to demonstrate their position. Mr. Abram had his own point of view also; his individuality asserted itself. He played the Peace-maker. In such circumstance it is the salvation of a man to have his own convictions; no need to borrow at first or second hand. Strength, sincerity, and independence are bulwarks; the feeble-spirited are swamped. Reliant upon his own attitude, Mr. Abram wrote to satisfy himself. By this, in the end, he satisfied the many; there were mal-contents; there were hard words said, he—super-sensitive—did not heed. Conciliatory and yet convinced, he spoke his mind in print; all outrage was mercilessly condemned; he believed in Law and Order. Presently, when

the storm slackened and men were less bitter in act if not in thought, Mr. Abram, and an able few, sprang to the opportunity; "shop" meetings were held in the various districts; many of these Mr. Abram personally attended; imperative yet comprehending; willing to listen yet with his sense of what was wise unaltered; a tactician, with an authoritative voice. Then came those laborious meetings at which delegates met; full of excitement, of fever; angry words flying; opposing attitudes; faint hope of settlement. Mr. Abram would come out, pale, husky, exhausted; a white excitement under control. Control came to him in crises; he rose to the occasion—as the phrase goes; the little details of life ever caught him unawares; he was fretful at them; impatient, seeing mountains in mole-hills. In this, also, a paradox. A French epigrammatist—too little read—described Man as a bundle of convictions; Woman of contradictions. Mr. Abram had both; the defects of his qualities; the qualities of his defects. I quote a few lines from Mr. Abram's earlier impression of cotton workers, contained in an interesting paper on the "Social Condition and Political Prospects of the Lancashire Workmen," contributed to *The Fortnightly Review*, for October, 1868. Mr. John Morley, a Blackburn man—now the Right Hon. John Morley—was Editor of *The Fortnightly*. Mr. Abram wrote:—"My first recollections of the factory people of Lancashire date from the year 1843, when I was resident in a manufacturing village on the eastern border of the County. I have often watched the factories 'loosing'—to use a local phrase—towards eight o'clock in the evening, and noticed how the poor jaded creatures—men, women, and children, who had been kept incessantly at work, with the briefest intervals for meals devoured hastily in the rooms, from

five in the morning—dragged their limbs wearily up the steep hill to their homes. Many of them were grievously deformed in frame, their skins and clothing smeared with oil and grime, the young among them sickly and wan, the middle-aged prematurely broken down and decrepit, and all so evidently dejected in spirit, seemed to my young eyes the very embodiment of hopelessness. The common bodily deformity was partially due to the practice of setting children to heavy work before their limbs had become set, and partly to the propulsion of machinery in certain departments of the manufacture, by the knees of the operative. It was no wonder if these disagreeable impressions led one to consider the old factory system as a system of galling and grinding slavery. The Hours of Labour in Factories Act, passed in 1844, and materially amended in 1847 and 1856, worked a thorough reform. Its beneficial effects upon the population cannot be exaggerated." Later in the article, Mr. Abram succinctly describes the domestic comforts of the operative under the new *régime*:—"The dwellings of the operatives are now long rows of two-storied buildings, with a couple of rooms upon each floor, the rental of which varies according to size and situation, from half-a-crown to four shillings and sixpence per week, the landlord generally paying the rates. The furniture of the living room may consist of a dresser, an eight-day clock, kitchen sofa, and a couple of rocking chairs at either side of the fireplace. The walls are usually adorned with two or three framed engravings or coloured lithographs. The better-paid workmen improve upon this a little. Their front apartment on the ground floor is dubbed a parlour, and its furniture includes a small bookcase if the man be studious, or if, as is not unfrequent, he has a taste

for music—a piano. . . . . I believe there is no operative population in the World so well and cheaply housed as are the factory workers in a Lancashire manufacturing town of the second or third magnitude." So Mr. Abram wrote in 1868; To-Day—a quarter of a Century later—those comfortable conditions still prevail; bettered, if anything, and changed very little in the assortment of goods and chattels that go to make up an operative's home. So much of Mr. Abram's article is of interest, I would I could quote the whole of it, but must content myself with this striking "summary" at the close:—"Whatever his fellows in the Metropolis and in other great cities of the Empire may be, the Lancashire workman is no Republican. The uttermost flight of his fancy never carries him to the shore of revolution. His intellect is not so volatile as to be led captive by subversive theories. Nothing but sharp and long-continued privation could ever sting him into Communism." Mr. Abram's prophecy; made in the very month that the enlarged Franchise swung Liberalism into power and Conservatism laboured, a minority; has proved true; has exceeded even his prediction—made on the verge of the bitterest political battle ever fought in Blackburn, the election of 1868. The tendency of the Lancashire boroughs is Conservative rather than Communistic. I will end my endeavour to outline Mr. Abram's life-long interest in the staple Industry of Blackburn, by quoting from the last magazine article he ever wrote, its subject, also—Lancashire. Here, again, is an instance of the peculiar simplicity—amid all the manifold sympathies—of Mr. Abram's career. It began, in a public sense, with the Library; it closed, in a public sense, with the Library; as Man of Letters it began with Lancashire; it closed with Lancashire. The phrase "What

Lancashire says To-Day, England will say To-Morrow" had once greater meaning than to-day; but the phrase was inspired by these downright, doing men; men of force, of fearlessness. As Journalist Mr. Abram began with the interests of his adopted town and native County; the last newspaper article he ever wrote, on that May morning, was on "The Trade of the Week." The short article combined his two trade interests: Press and Loom; his Journalism ended in the way it began, also. He was only fifty-nine years old, yet his life may be said to have been absolutely fulfilled. I quote from the much-discussed article in *Blackwood's Magazine*, of July, 1892, on "The Prospective Decline of Lancashire"—a gap of twenty-four years between it and that first article in *The Fortnightly*. Mr. Abram's closing sentences in "Maga" are stately in their solemn sadness; a panegyric and a pathos at once; they may be taken almost with the tone of a personal Farewell. "Lancashire will die hard, and slowly, though it may be with recurrent social convulsion and commercial cataclysm. The time is not quite at hand when it shall be numbered with those ancient seats of Empire and marts of ocean-ranging commerce. But that this County—filled with cities vying in vastness with the capitals of the greatest nations, and towns which are so many human hives, with factories, foundries, forges, and workshops innumerable; served by magnificent ports and merchant fleets; teeming with a keen, striving population of nigh four millions—has passed the meridian of its prosperity, and has entered upon the first stage of its declension, is the gloomy conviction to which a constant and close observation of its course has forced the reluctant minds of some of its inhabitants who are not least jealous of its fame, or proud of its record of peaceful conquests and its former pre-

eminence as the school of inventors and the home of the mechanical arts."

Twice elected a Governor of Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School; once as representative of the Town Council; secondly as Co-optative Governor, Mr. Abram maintained an interest and his place on the Board to the end, sharing in the recent re-adjustment of the Institution. His work, as Governor, is to be found in the carrying through of a scheme of Scholarships for the clever sons of working men unable to afford their boys the higher and more advanced education. These Scholarships gave such boys opportunities otherwise beyond them; the scheme was, at first, somewhat opposed, but Mr. Abram succeeded in demonstrating the fairness, the usefulness of the proposal; he won the Board to a majority of thinking; the scheme was adopted. In 1885 he was—to his pleasurable surprise—made a Borough Magistrate. The honour gratified him the more, insomuch that his name had been submitted to Mr. Chaplin by the Conservatives, then his political adversaries (prior to the "split" of the Liberal Party on Mr. Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill). Mr. Abram was taken unawares; a little astonished; willing at once to act; afterwards he became wedded to the duty; was unwilling to miss his weekly sitting on the Bench; his brother Magistrates—upon a Wednesday—were as regular as he; attachments grow; men get into each other's way of thinking. If the Chairmanship of the Free Library and Art Gallery was the climacteric in book-love, the Magisterial Bench topped his municipal service. His individuality was here, again, stronger than the traditional; he was no somnolent Shakespearean Justice; he came on the Bench with a stern anxiety upon his face, obviously

conscious of the Law's Authority; his eyes and mind eager, knowing his hand would weigh in The Scales. He asked questions; pointed questions; would stop a witness's rambling story to get to what he conceived to be relevant matter; watched all very closely; indulged in philosophy warmed by impatience; would bring his knowledge of human nature to bear; now and then would relax the Court into a smile, smiling himself; turn a phrase smartly; essay a *bon mot*; suddenly remember the Law's Authority; his face grave again—the face of a man much older than his smile. Yet there was a touch of the Elizabethan about him; he was susceptible to the divinity that hangs above the Bench; *Honi soit qui mal y pense;* the Lion, the Unicorn, the Shield of England—the rest of it. He was too intense; the old restlessness came upon him; he looked at the clock; pulled up the fledgling solicitor taking his airing. The elder lawyers knew their man; made headway; got a joke in at the right time resulting in counter-thrust; "the case" went swimmingly. His admonitions to the "Dock" were caustic and clear; his words now and then beyond the Prisoner, happy in his unintellectual misunderstanding. I should describe Mr. Abram as a Magistrate tempered with Mercy, but the Mercy wore a severe face above the white tie. This white tie (in a bow) was one of the heir-looms of Nonconformity, handed down, no doubt, from his father the Reverend Robert Abram, and other divines, of whom, presently, I shall have a little to say. Mr. Abram's Magisterial work had its severe side; he had a bold share in the closing of the low dancing saloons, the refusal of the music licenses; his part also in the sudden blow at the beerhouses, that rang through England, a precedent in performance that bravely stood the test of

Appeal and remains Law. His Educational, Municipal, Magisterial, and Commercial interests having been outlined, I must pass allied work in rapid review. A founder of the Blackburn Literary Club, he donned wig and gown, in 1861, as Counsel in the famous (mock) trial, "Bardell *versus* Pickwick"; this was his initiation into the Law. In later years, ere Revising Barristers were appointed to undertake the revision of the Voters' Lists, Mr. Abram spent crowded and heated nights in deciding Claims and Objections; cutting short the wordy wrangles of the respective Agents, giving or denying people their votes. Now taking "The Chair" for Oscar Wilde; now interested in obtaining the Gilchrist Lectures; for ten years a Sunday School teacher at Park Road Congregational School, his large class of "young" men—many of them grey and older than himself—drawn by his vigorous, virile addresses—his favourite apostle St. Paul; "Member for London University" in the local Parliamentary Debating Society, airing his statesmanship and denouncing the Government or flouting the Opposition, as the occasion required or as "his Party" happened to be circumstanced; Member of the Liberal Executive, full in the strategy of Party—detesting anything mean; preaching now and again at the little Independent Meeting House in moorland Tockholes—once his father's "flock"; contributing papers to the Royal Historical Society, of which he was a Fellow; writing a History of Independency for the celebration of the local Centenary; Honorary Secretary—with others, equally energetic—in opening soup kitchens for distressed operatives; adding his few words of municipal welcome to Lord Wolseley, victorious from Tel-el-Kebir; writing to induce Mr. John Morley to contest Blackburn, in 1869 (a contest

ending unsuccessfully : in one sense, however politically one might differ, a reproach to Blackburn); enjoying an excursion into the country as one of the Field Naturalists of the Local Society; undertaking another Class of Young Men (at Furthergate Congregational School) again "young men" of questionable years with, here and there, grey hairs ; a Class that became known for its numbers and its enterprises ; finally presenting Mr. Abram with a remarkably fine portrait (in oil) of his beloved Cromwell, painted by Cattermole, R.I. Mr. Abram was on the Committee of the local branch of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children ; on the Council of the Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire ; Corresponding Member of the Historic Society of those Counties.

Much of Mr. Abram's book and magazine work must, perforce, pass unquoted ; his fine descriptions of Lancashire Manor Houses (illustrated by Mr. Herbert Railton), appearing in *The Art Journal* and *The Magazine of Art;* his *Guild Roll* Volume in the Series published by the Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire—(he was engaged upon the Whalley Registers, for the Record Society, at the time of his death)—his contributions to the volumes of the Royal Historical Society; and of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire; his own volume on *Memorials of Preston Guilds;* his other books and booklets, issued at one time or other. The Dedication in *The History of Blackburn*, ought to be reproduced : "To the living Author-Antiquaries of Lancashire, whose combined labours have recovered so much lost treasure from the buried hoards of Time—and to the constant patrons of County Historical Literature, whose support has contributed to make accessible in books, the riches of antique lore which lay hid in obscure muniments and remote

archives—this Volume of Parish History is respectfully dedicated." I find mention of Mr. Abram's name in the Prefaces of other men. In the Reverend Dr. Grosart's monumental Edition of the complete works of Spenser, in Prose and Verse: "My sense of obligation to three literary friends and book-mates—Mr. Harrold Littledale, of Baroda, India, Mr. W. A. Abram, of Blackburn, and the Reverend Prebendary Hayman, of Douglas Rectory, Cork. My new Life would have lacked a good deal had not these good friends helped me from their full stores. . . . . Vol. X., Glossary, with Notes and Illustrations, will largely benefit from their unflagging interest and practical aid." It was, to Mr. Abram, a proud pleasure to be associated with his "learned neighbour," in these matters; to be of assistance in the production of those choice volumes, so chastely printed, so fraught and full of the Dead Worthies in whom both took delight. Mr. Abram's help with the "Towneley Hall MSS"; in "The English Jacobite Ballads," and in Dr. Grosart's conscientious Edition of Herrick, was acknowledged by the Dedication of the Edition of "The Poems of Richard James, B.D.," to Mr. Abram, as "A Brother-Antiquary and very dear Friend of many years now." That Friendship had one other, a last, tribute at "the grave's mouth," Dr. Grosart delivering the Address (one remarkable for its impressiveness; for its Elizabethian utterance), upon his dead friend. To the recent edition of Baines's "History of Lancashire," edited by Mr. James Croston, F.S.A., Mr. Abram was a contributor, his "generous help," acknowledged; in the handsome volumes of "East Cheshire, Past and Present," the work of another treasured literary friend, the Reverend J. P. Earwaker, M.A., F.S.A., Mr. Abram took great interest; in a later Edition of Whitaker's "History of Whalley"; in

"The Palatine Notebook"; "Local Gleanings"; "Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Notes," there are acknowledgments and evidences of Mr. Abram's work; to many Parish Histories he lent aid; I find his Descriptive Letterpress accompanying "Views of the Old Halls of Lancashire and Cheshire,"—including the engravings of N. G. Philips—a fine folio volume, published by Gray, of London, in 1893; "Murray's Handbook of Lancashire," and the Manchester Literary Club's book of "Lancashire Authors," knew Mr. Abram's touch—finally the hundreds of Historical and Topographical articles contributed to Preston and Blackburn newspapers.

Time and turmoil curtailed Mr. Abram's work on many of the Committees I have enumerated, yet he had a passion for work, ignoring its penalty. There were other phases: each morning brought its batch of letters from all parts of England—Mr. Abram was a generally known genealogist. His skill as an antiquary had travelled far; Americans came to consult him, on their way through Europe; the operative, with an Estate in Chancery (or in imagination) consulted him; could he show how to "get the money?" He was sorry to have to discourage these; he did it in painstaking letters, often taking too much trouble. Antiquaries asked for this or that Transcript; what did Mr. Abram think of this or that Imperfect Inscription copied from brass or headstone; people "founding families" enquired of Heraldry; or had anxieties about "Augmentations"; letters came in such simple phrases as: a roundel, a Lion, *passant reguardant*, in sinister chief, *a boar's head*—all very interesting, intelligible. Correspondents tracing collaterals; finding out they had forefathers; would it "be too much trouble for

Mr. Abram"—to search half the week, the latter unwritten; to be read between the lines. These letters, coming by the dozen, became a burden; inevitably many had to be unanswered; Mr. Abram often said his life might be spent in answering letters; was it possible people imagined he had nothing to do? Only the more important, the more pressing, were replied to; people jumped to a conclusion of discourtesy, not comprehending the circumstance. Again with documents; they rained in upon him; he pored over the dog-Latin of deeds, able to read, almost with ease, what to most eyes looked upside down; and equally unreadable downside up. He met many people of all degree; was at home, given intellectual company; had not the light mood of Society, yet could be an excellent *raconteur*, setting the table amused. Among his literary acquaintance, the late Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth who published various volumes, and a romance; the late Sir Henry de Hoghton, one of the kindest in encouragement when Mr. Abram set forth upon *The History of Blackburn.* He discussed Cromwell with the late Lord Justice Bowen, defending the Protector with protectorial vigour; Mr. Abram was quite fearless in debate; he had the *cachet* of culture; had read unceasingly; his brain stored with facts that fought in square fashion. He was prone to argument, yet extraordinarily patient with old men; to these his manner changed, becoming deferential; tempering the tumult of discussion to Age. Ever making new acquaintance his predilection clung to the old; the old were dearest, because oldest; again his innate instinct to cherish the Time-tried. Many were dead, but a few remained; he regarded these with deep-rooted affection. One other little trait I re-call. In his concentrated life he had to do with many public appointments.

It was his inviolable rule to vote for the best man; never would he promise his vote before-hand; "if it were my own brother I should vote against him, if he were not the most suitable man." His unbending attitude caused pain at times; he was too emphatic in enforcing his rule; would then try to heal the hurt; explaining almost apologetically his stand-point; using, perhaps, too many of the strenuous words that came to him at all times with ease. Mr. Abram had not a happy knack in saying "No"; we have all heard—with wonder—of people who can refuse as graciously as they can give; you lose sight of the negative in their politeness; hours afterwards you discover that a delicate negative may yet be an emphatic and a hopeless No. Mr. Abram's "No" was too swift, more particularly in small things; his "Yes" followed afterward, or not at all. Having to do with so many Public Bodies he was besieged at times by applicants soliciting his vote; he could not content himself to say he could not; he had to explain why. His Principles justified him; he would vote "for the best man"; unfortunately, the argument was hardly convincing; every Applicant *was* the best man. His selections were the best men, as a rule; it was a pleasure to him to mark the progress of his men. "Well, we got our man in"—one of his phrases. He would fight his hardest for the man of his choice—a choice made on merit; lucky the applicant with Mr. Abram on his side—a voluntary champion. One Volunteer is worth three Pressed Men, even in these matters. What was true of his Public, was true also of his Press preferences. He had to do with pushing men on; gave them the lift over the stile; the downright word at the right moment. Thus it came about that, in the course of his life, he had become interested in quite a number of young men;

with letters—as credentials for these—here and there; it was a great pride to him to hear tell of their advancement; to know that the career he had influenced was making its mark on the target.

This mention of the Press comes like an echo; suggesting that strong Voice so long a trumpet-note in local newspaper columns. I must speak a little of Mr. Abram's association with Journalism, and of that painful time when he, a man who delighted in the well-trod paths, had yet to set forth upon new ways. Conviction was a very tempest with him. The wind that blew so strongly, keeping the Liberal fires bright for many years, ended in the whirlwind. Mr. Abram did not tack; he could not; nor trim; he put his helm right over and went through the teeth of the storm; to the last there was left evidence of those bitter and seething waters. People whose political convictions are adequately expressed by their votes; made oral by a cross upon Voting Paper, can have but faint idea of the strife that is waged in the mind of a man who—having with voice and pen upheld one Party the better, the greater, part of a lifetime—finds it absolute to turn his back upon the Past; setting a life's work, politically, at naught. Mr. Abram was in exceptional severity of situation. His Liberal Principles had been hewn by himself; his words were hung up in front of him; Town and District accepted the solidarity of his speech and writing as the inviolable faith of one eminently a thinker, a scholar, and yet an ardent believer in legitimate and reverent Reform. He had brought a Liberal newspaper into widespread popularity in a Tory town; he had, as Editor and Speaker, his part in the election of a Liberal—Mr. W. E. Briggs—as Junior Member, and again at the head of the poll—a political paradox—the one Liberal representative of the

Town since the Reform Bills of 1867-68, himself now detached from the same Party by the same schism. Mr. Abram could not conceal his identity as Editor ; did not try ; once again his individuality won ; the question "Have you read Mr. Abram's article" came into vogue—meaning the unsigned opinion of the newspaper. As Lecturer, as Politician, as Journalist, Mr. Abram became welded to Liberalism, yet he had to break the chain that bound him, finding it no stronger, after all, than its weakest link ; that link Mr. Gladstone's first Bill for Irish Home Rule. I am aware that I am upon controversial ground ; there is no need to "unsheathe the weapons of political warfare at the grave's mouth, else they might well shiver in my grasp" (Dr. Grosart's graphic and grandly put phrase), but it is right that the sacrifice Mr. Abram made, for Conscience' sake, should win the sincerity of sympathy even from those who, in the heat of internecine war, hurled the unthinking epithets that struck him with the force of sharp stones. He threw back as vigorously, as manfully, even with bitterness ; never with loss of dignity, nor honour ; in the end he was the more respected, but it was recognition hardly won, at the point of the bayonet, with much wounding of spirit. For sixteen months Mr. Abram endured the position : Editor of a Liberal newspaper unable longer to support Mr. Gladstone. From the Summer of 1886 to the Spring of 1887, Mr. Abram contrived, with marvellous skill, to hold the situation in fee ; not one word did he put to paper in favour of the measures he abhorred. For the time *The Blackburn Times* became Unionist. The proprietors decided that their other newspapers, chief of which was *The Preston Guardian* —(of which paper Mr. Abram had been, since 1869, Editorial writer and Archæological Editor, looking to the

then head of the firm, the late Mr. George Toulmin, of Preston, a man of exceeding ability in the establishment of dominant Journals, for suggestion and occasional direction) —should support Mr. Gladstone, while they were willing that Mr. Abram should follow his own undeviating course with the Blackburn paper. The position was of terrible perplexity to Mr. Abram, and, doubtless, to Mr. John Toulmin and to Mr. George Toulmin, Junior. During those sixteen months Mr. Abram's mind was full of the battle; a campaign ground of convictions. The newspaper maintained its high mark; it suffered neither in loss of influence nor in the lapse of those elements that make a newspaper commercially successful; it lost prestige with its Party as a political machine. No newspaper was a political automaton under Mr. Abram. When the end came, it came voluntarily. Writing to Mr. John Toulmin, on the 31st March, 1887, Mr. Abram stated that since the Summer of 1886, he had resolved that he would not remain Editor during another General Election, and that he could neither write, speak, nor vote for Gladstonian candidates at parliamentary or municipal elections. "I should have resigned," he wrote, "even if there had been no other prospect for my pen . . . . . When I am away you will be able to place *The Blackburn Times* in line with your other papers on the Irish and related questions. . . . . It is a pleasant recollection, on parting, that, during these twenty years, there has not occurred a single dispute or misunderstanding between the members of the firm and myself." Mr. Abram's association with his readers had been so personal he could not do otherwise than take a Farewell. I quote the concluding sentences of Mr. Abram's last leading article contributed to *The Times*,

under the heading *The Editor's Farewell:* "The Retiring Editor is glad that this farewell is not the sign of parting from friends of social ranks and political sections. He likes Blackburn and the surrounding country ; he likes the sturdy energetic Blackburn people ; and he can still hope to end his days in or near the old Town with whose History he is proud to have been permitted to associate his name." Mr. Abram's hope was fulfilled. The other "prospect," referred to in Mr. Abram's letter of resignation, was the founding of Conservative and Unionist evening and weekly newspapers urged upon Mr. Abram by the Conservative Party. He undertook the Editorship and Editorial management ; threw into the effort the old untiring energy ; wrote too hard ; worked too hard ; no man could wear out the body in service of the brain at Mr Abram's rate of writing and expect to be long-lived. Nine and ten columns a week, written with the prescience and precision Mr. Abram held should be found in journalistic effort—was a mild matter to a man who had written a many-column Review of the Year in a day and a night. In certain ways, Mr. Abram set difficult precedents ; precedents that ought not to have been permitted. Mr. Abram never had a holiday—from writing. He had holidays, many pleasant expeditions, but his writing went with him—a Frankenstein. In addition to the claims of journalism, Mr. Abram's antiquarian and literary work must be borne in mind ; his correspondence also, his swift and encyclopædic assistance in the works of other men. Mr. Abram's relation with all the newspapers I have mentioned, ended and resumed. After an arduous period with the Conservative and Unionist journals, Mr. Abram resigned. He had put forth his uttermost in the task of founding those Journals ; his views were not compatible with the views of

others; the present hour is not best suited to my saying more. The mistake was not Mr. Abram's. Ultimately, his association was resumed; his pen again making itself felt, again recognised, beneath its strenuous anonymity, at the time of his death. His connection, in a literary and antiquarian sense, with *The Blackburn Times* and *The Preston Guardian*, survived even the tragic severance of 1887; these quaint Characters of Old Blackburn smiled their broad smile from the columns of the first newspaper child he cherished and guided in growth —*The Blackburn Times*. Mr. Abram's Unionism was irrevocable. Force, weight, vigour, were Mr. Abram's characteristics as a newspaper writer, but he could write lightly when he chose, wittily, poetically, tenderly; the language of feeling; he could brighten his article by quips and cranks; he could prick an opponent—one invulnerable to the sledge-hammer stroke—with sarcasm; he utilized the Vocabulary in his scathing denunciation of knavery and wrong-doing. His proofs revised, the strain of mental thought ended, Mr. Abram was seen at his best. The stern features relaxed, his face lighting to Youth again. In the days when he was chief at *The Blackburn Times*, it was his habit to conclude his editorial revision between ten and twelve o'clock on the Friday night, and woe betide the man who intruded to interrupt as he gave the last touches to his article. When the last proof was read, though he had been working at high-pressure since the morning, he would invariably go to the composing-room for a "crack" with the men. The weary compositors would rest their "sticks" for a few brief moments upon their "cases." Proof readers, overseer, compositors, took a respite from work to listen to his sallies, his jokes. Presently, he left with a hearty "Good-Night." A

"companionship" that includes the Editor is the best of all working companionships. For ten years Mr. Abram had hinted at retirement into private life, to enjoy in comfort the rest that surely had been won, yet he could not bring his mind to the doing of it; the sight of a newspaper still a challenge to write; a sign of a deed the instant desire to search; the mere murmur of Movement a shout to begin. And so it happened, on that last day and night in early May, Mr. Abram was full-handed; utterly full-handed and surrounded; the Press and the Town's Trade in the young morning; a Magistrate by noon; an Antiquary during subsequent hours; a chooser of pictures, for the Public Pleasure, in the evening—his life ending with his brightest, happiest interest of all.

I go back to Mr. Abram's boyhood, to the influence of family, to those hereditary tendencies, surer Master of Man than either Fate or Circumstance, for the final pastel pictures I would paint of one who was fit subject for careful drawing: line upon line rather than swift light and shadow. A miniature of Mr. Abram—having to sacrifice much, being on a small scale—would retain earnestness to the last; with the broader crayon I have essayed, it has been necessary to work in contrasts. This series of sketches—I dare not call silhouettes for it has always struck me that the term seemed black and unillumined—would not be complete without that deference to boyhood (and to Custom) biographers are prone to show; obtaining the good graces of the child, ere they grapple with the less impressionable nature of the man. Yet, in the sum of Life, manhood counting for so much more than boyhood, it seems to me an error to commence modelling in clay when the bold colours of a career come first to hand.

Mr. Abram's life had long been in the furnace; it had not melted like wax; the vase was deliac, with severe ornamentation, not the fine china that looks so pretty. It is for the biographer to look upon the vessel; to learn—if he can—the secret of the ware. He cares more for the unbroken vase, than for the original clay. It is for this reason I began to write of William Alexander Abram as a man.

He was born on the sunny side of Lancashire, perhaps that he might have light enough to guide him to those heights and moors whereon he spent his life. Snugly away, even yet, from the railway, fair among its fertile lands is the hamlet of Lydiate; you never hear of it as you travel between Liverpool and Ormskirk; there is no Station nearer than Town Green. So Lydiate is two something miles on your left hand—not half-way in a lane that will (after many turnings) lead you to Formby Lighthouse and the sea. It is a pleasant hamlet; there are the ivied remains of what is called—not altogether for courtesy's sake—Lydiate "Abbey"; there is an old Hall, a little in decay, but bravely showing a timbered front. Small and smiling as the village was it contained two archæological interests when the eldest son of the Reverend Robert Abram, Congregational Minister, at Lydiate, was born. Not many years ago Mr. W. A. Abram visited Lydiate, not having cast eyes upon its prettiness since he was driven away in a friendly farmer's useful conveyance, in 1837, being then two years old. Looking casually at a pocket Tourist's Map of Lancashire, I find that the well-known topographical pencil had been at work upon a spare fly-leaf. This map was evidently companion to Mr. Abram on his latter-day journey. To look at his swift, sure lines is to see the little village; to see him standing there, also, making his hasty survey. Two

roads grow close friends and then run on together. To celebrate this there is a sign-post and a patch of village green. The sign-post can send you to Southport, but you may linger in Rosemary Lane. The village brook shares in the rural amity and runs across both roads; a tiny tunnel imprisoning it just where it would otherwise have trespassed in the gardens of the two old houses that face the sign-post and do not look at it, not caring for the Outer World. It is all a natural letter Y, with the whilom home of the Reverend Robert Abram at the point where the two arms meet. The ground plan of the two houses is drawn; a cross attracts your attention to the margin: "In this house the Reverend Robert Abram lived, in 1833-37." All this is to be learned from the hasty survey of the topographical traveller visiting his birthplace. Lydiate was a sunny introduction for a boy who grew to know the frown of the World. Mr. W. A. Abram was born on the 18th of January, 1835. His father was a Nonconformist Minister of a type that knew hard work and some stone throwing; often he felt the sharp blows. He preached in the Chapel if there was one; if not, it was quite easy to hold Service in the house of some opulent farmer who had a leaning, or, at least, a toleration, toward Dissent. It was a simple Gospel that the Reverend Robert Abram preached to the Country-side; the day of many "Isms" had not dawned. For all that, the dogma was dogmatic, I do not doubt; it was also sincere. Mr. Abram thought nothing of long walks or long drives in the bitter winter weather (then located on the East Lancashire and West Yorkshire moors), to Chapel or Farm; preaching a doctrine by no means acceptable to the Squire or the Parson; a creed that needed some conviction to carry

it through in those days, with poverty clinging on the one hand and prejudice crowding on the other. Mr. Abram was in intellectual advance of the lesser lights of Nonconformity; he wrote hymns that were printed and circulated among the Congregations; he spoke at the annual meetings of the Congregational Union; he even had a sermon in print now and again—that Himalayan height of a pastor's ambition. Born in June, 1805, the son of James Abram, Yeoman, of North Meols (of whom there is much record), Robert Abram was preaching at the age of twenty. In 1832, he joined the Independent Church, at Southport—the Reverend George Greatbach, being Pastor—and served a probationary period as Scripture Reader and Preacher in the out districts. Next year there followed a regular appointment. I quote from the denominational Report of 1833-4: "Mr. Abram, who occupies this field of labour (the Formby district), has been indefatigable during the past year. Throughout the Summer he preached at eight different places in this district: Ainsdale, Altcar, Lydiate (his abiding place), Down-Holland, Haskayne, Hallsall, Bickerstaffe, and Sephton. While the weather permitted he preached at three of these villages every Sabbath Day." It was in the autumn of 1837 (his eldest son, William Alexander being two years and a half old), that the Reverend Robert Abram, his wife and the three children then born to them, migrated to those uncouth moors that look austerely down on two Counties; that bold bastion guarding Lancashire and Yorkshire. It was a great, almost a highland, change from the low fertile levels of Lydiate to the sparse fells of Martin Top, near Gisburn-in-Craven, Yorkshire. The Historian of Blackburn was too young to note the incident of journey, but maternal memory befriended imagination, in after years. At the

Easter of 1894, Mr. Abram stood on one of the spurs of Pendle, and, pointing to an upland toiling road, spoke of the time when he travelled up it—a child secure in the pannier of a pack-mule. In those days mules were used on these moorland roads; slow but sure-footed; able to endure; willing to climb after a munch or two—the inexpensive creatures. The Ordination of the Reverend Robert Abram was conducted with the solemnity suited to Strict Doctrine. I quote from a record of the time: "The solemn services of the day were conducted in the following order:—The Reverend Mr. Aspinall, of Colne, gave a Scriptural explanation of a Christian Church, and proposed several questions to Mr Abram; the Reverend Mr. Driver, of Holden, commended the Pastor to God, in prayer; the Reverend Mr. Wadsworth, of Clitheroe, gave the Charge; the Reverend Mr. Greenall, of Burnley, preached to the People." The recital of so much severe simplicity makes one a little timid to enter the Chapel, though one's fancy would willingly take us back through the half Century. At Martin Top, Mr. Abram preached at nine out-stations besides at his own Chapel. Six years later (William Alexander being then aged eight), Mr. Abram accepted the invitation of the Church at Marsden, near Burnley; preached at out-stations during the week, and "three times on the Sabbath"; the present Chapel and Cause at Barrowford owning his initiative; new schools built and a day school started, at his own place, in addition. Mr. William Alexander Abram's recollection ran easily back to those days in Marsden. It was from Marsden he put his first foot into the World, being sent to Silcoates School in 1846, a school for the sons of Congregational Ministers, esteemed for its influence; made noted by many of its scholars; its boys in the mission fields of many lands. Father and son walked

to Todmorden, a town that appealed to the boy's fancy—one where you could have a foot in Lancashire and the other in Yorkshire!—and William went to Wakefield by Coach and came home, on hard-won holidays, with a pea-shooter in his pocket (like other boys), and a friend in the red-faced Coachman. Wakefield Church spire struck him as a landmark, first time, and ever afterward remained so. He had experiences at School that never quite taught him to be restful, but which inspired him with a respect for Discipline; he was high up in his Form in Latin; almost always top in History; very generally in Geography—his preferences at a glance. The masters were stern in those days; William Alexander had a few thousands of lines to do for not toeing the line, or for asserting himself too soon in a satisfied World, by contradicting a Junior Master. He was a scholar at Silcoates for three or four years. On the 12th of August, 1849, the summit of the Reverend Robert Abram's modest career as a Minister, was attained—he was "called" to the Independent Chapel, at Tockholes. For two Centuries and a half, Nonconformity has had a home in this out of the way village on the early breezy slopes of still breezier moors. For some few of my facts, concerning the career of the Reverend Robert Abram, I am indebted to the interesting "History of the Old Independent Chapel, Tockholes, or Two Centuries and a Half of Nonconformity," by the Reverend B. Nightingale, himself associated by family with the Township. To be Pastor of the Old Independent Chapel suggested that a man had become one of the elder and more authoritative Divines. Nonconformity had fought a stiff fight for this haven in a quaintly named Township; tradition clung to the place; no doubt the Reverend Robert Abram was a proud man. With the New Year (1850), Mr. Abram was formally

welcomed; presented with a watch and chain although but at work (informally) five months; he composed a special Hymn for the occasion, old style, in this easy singing swing:—

> The Grace we praise, which did ordain
> A lot so blest as this;
> And gave a Pastor to explain
> Rich Gospel mysteries.

The "Manse"—if I may call it that—was Silk Hall (there was active trade in silk and cotton in Tockholes early in the Century), used as a home for the Pastor, having been purchased for that purpose. From the windows of Silk Hall the boy first saw the view he grew to love so much in later days—the undulations, the scarped hill on which stands Hoghton Tower, the Ribble broadening to the sea. In April, 1850, not quite a year after his father's arrival in Tockholes, William Alexander Abram signed his name on the Indenture of his Apprenticeship to Mr. John Neville Haworth, printer and stationer, of Blackburn. The apprenticeship was for the usual term of seven years. The Indenture is before me as I write; the signature characteristic; almost suggesting the autograph to be read beneath Mr. Abram's portrait. It was a keen change from the culture of books, even of school-books, to the long hours worked, and the threadbare wages paid, in printing offices in those days. No limit to the working hours was known; such trifling matter was ruled by the exigencies of orders; the lad often worked far into the night, lodging in Blackburn, as he somewhere relates in this book; walking home at the week's end, late on the Saturday night, to be cheered by familiar faces, consoled by the close-packed Services of the Sabbath. There was heartiness at Tockholes. In 1851, Bethesda Chapel (another Independent Meeting

House), which had been closed and was taking kindly to decay, was purchased by the Reverend Mr. Abram and his people. He drew crowded congregations; it was said that "his hand was formed to shake hands with"; he worked too hard; the fatigues of distant preachings had told upon him; he fell ill in 1852 and went to Southport to gain strength. His doctor forbade him to preach; he would preach, even at Southport; there were great gatherings in the old Southport Chapel; his discourses were of the kind that moved men; it is recorded that Dr. Mc.All, after hearing him preach twice at Southport, said, "Ah! this is the preaching that is wanted!" On the 24th of July, 1852, the Reverend Robert Abram lay death-stricken. Next day, a Sunday, his people passed in and out of the Manse, taking farewell of their Pastor, from the morning till evening closed. He said to these: "I die in the faith of the Nonconformists; I die in the glorious Atonement of our Lord; I die in the faith of the necessity of the Holy Spirit's influence to renew and sanctify the soul." The following Friday he was dead; to his burial at Bethesda Chapel came the Vicar of Tockholes and many Nonconformist Ministers; Services were held at both the Chapels in Tockholes at one hour, each being crowded; I quote the words of the Rev. B. Nightingale: "No Minister ever left behind him a more saintly influence than did Mr. Robert Abram. Though his Ministry was brief at Tockholes, he was loved to excess." Physically, he was short in stature; dark hair, almost black; dark brown eyes, a lustre in them; complexion of colour and contrast, red and white, very clear. His eldest son had light hair that might have been termed golden; keen blue-grey eyes, able to light up, also; taller than his father by many inches, though he lost these by the

stoop of the student in recent years. The father was active, but he had not the resistless stamina of the son ; the one died aged forty-seven ; the other, living at thrice the pressure, worked in his sixtieth year. They had this in common : the passionate temperament.

William Alexander Abram was seventeen years old, when his father died. There were five other children ; four younger, one older ; he was the eldest son. The Manse had to be left ; apprentice wages never yet whistled a welcome ; in those days the simple, severe life was more bravely borne than it would be now. The situation compels silence. Mrs. Abram was, happily, more than The Mistress of Circumstance ; she mastered it ; she was a woman of dauntless courage, unbending will, intellectual power. The Historian of Blackburn had his full share of heredity ; he ascribed the strength of his character, his ability of brain, in the proportion of mother to father— not father to mother. The Reverend Robert Abram had gifts ; he could be—and was—a good Minister ; Mary Abram, with her high principle, her patience, her persistence, her wide reading, her capacity of thinking, could have been anything within woman's reach in her day. The eldest daughter of Mr. Stephen Faulkner, a Manchester manufacturer, she had had an exceptional education that fitted her for Opportunity ; Opportunity took severe guise ; it kept her fighting Necessity for a period of her life—a life frugal always, in a God-fearing sense. She was a disciplinarian, a deeply-loving woman beneath a Puritanical restraint ; in moments of emergency, Mary Abram was Pastor. She loved her children ; she taught them self-reliance ; she worked actively in the Sunday School. Having removed, from Tockholes to Blackburn, she resumed teaching at an

Independent Sunday School; taught when sixty-six years old; gave up her life to teach; was at the School the Sunday but one before death. In many ways a remarkable woman, loved by her scholars; short, with keen eyes, a spare frame, a high forehead, a cap, a sedately plain garb. Her prayer in the last week of her life was to be permitted one other Sunday in the School. It was not to be; she died on Saturday, February 13th, 1869. I quote from Mr. Abram's sorrow-stricken lines, written at Christmas, in Farewell of that Year:—

> We wish no more thine obdurate face to see
> Unless thou canst our quenched delights restore—
> Still Hearts, and buried Faces, and fled Souls—
> The vanished lives we bitterly deplore.
> How Time's huge wheel sweeps on! and as it rolls
> Grinds all to dust. . . . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Harsh year! Thou leavest us bereft of Friends,
> And wilt thou leave us quite bereft of Hope?
> Hast thou no message that can make amends?
> No word of Life's significance and hope?
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Oh! welcome Thou, that breaks fate's mystic seal,
> The insufferable silence ends and solves—
> The pregnant secret time could not reveal.

Mr. Abram had a life-long reverence for his Mother. It is worthy to note that she was fond of walking and of Nature; thought little of travelling on foot to Manchester, to see relations; to Lytham for a glimpse at the sea.

In the briefest way I will denote Mr. Abram's progress till I reach his appointment as Librarian, the first secure stepping-stone to his career. As a boy he frequented the Mechanics' Institute, borrowed its books; grew to have opinions, changed these to decided views, ultimately to

irrevocable convictions; met the Lancashire character and took the trouble to understand it; came out as a pamphleteer, replying to the then Vicar of Holy Trinity Church; went to London, fired by no sanguinity of temperament but driven by the desire to get on; was appointed in charge of the Greek and Latin departments in the book printing office of Mr. J. E. Adlard, St. Bartholomew's Close; became attached to London; a familiar at the British Museum; his off-days at Kew, or Hampton Court; connected with the "Poultry" Chapel in the City; waged warfare on the Cockney accent in Debating Societies; wrote communications to the Blackburn Liberal newspaper; tried Poetry, when in the mood; returned to Lancashire—a while in the printers' department of *The Preston Guardian.* The Opening and the Opportunity came at last; he was appointed Librarian of the Blackburn Free Library in 1860; in 1867, Editor of *The Blackburn Times.* Between these dates, in 1862 in fact, Mr. Abram married Elizabeth, fourth daughter of Mr. John Birtwistle, cotton manufacturer, of Accrington and Nelson, a man of individuality and power; a "Manchester Radical" of the Bright School. Mr. Abram, in his untiring life, relied greatly upon Mrs. Abram; much that was thought of, owed obligation to her interest and activity; many the happy suggestions that came from her; many the difficulties she lightened and brightened. Four sons were born; two died young; the third and fourth sons—Edmund William and Gilbert Percy—survive. In 1877, Mr. Abram published his long-prepared *History of Blackburn: Town and Parish*—a Parish History that was spoken of in critically-congratulatory terms by *The Athenæum*, *The Saturday Review*, and the chief newspapers of London and

the North. It has become a standard contribution to the History of this great County. At a dinner given to Mr. Abram in honour of his *History*, on February 9th, 1878, speeches were made. I go back to the records of these in order to quote a prophetic sentence from the speech of one of Mr. Abram's oldest—one of his dearest—friends, Mr. William Thomas Ashton, of Darwen. They had been friends through many changes; diversities did not divide them; in so many things had they marched together—love of their County, anxiety for its welfare, regard for its future; latter-day politics found them only the more closely allied. Mr. Ashton said: "In a few years their friend would be numbered with the Past, but he hoped some local writer would give them a little sketch of their friend who wrote the History of their Town. He believed a Memoir of Mr. Abram would add to the interest of the History." In reply, Mr. Abram said he "intended to say nothing about his own merits, or those of the book, for he respected and regarded the Scriptural saying: 'Let another praise thee, and not thine own lips.'" The Memoir has had to wait, seeing many volumes, from that indefatigable pen, come and go; *Memorials of Preston Guilds*, in 1882; the Record Society's volume of *Guild Rolls* in 1883-4; other books and booklets, in their decorous order, elsewhere in this volume. Mr. Ashton's prophecy and his hope have fulfilled themselves together, but a shadow is over the pages of a Memoir that might well have been written for Mr. Abram's eyes to see. By his grave many stood; otherwhere, many tokens that would have touched him, but the presence of his old Lancashire friend—Mr. Ashton—of his old Literary friend—Dr. Grosart—would have been most dear, could he have known.

Mr. Abram, though a modest man, with the eccentricity of being unable to ask a favour, had a touch of family pride. Engaged upon the pedigrees of many men, he had traced his own ancestry back to Tudor Times. Originally spelt Edburgham, or Adburgham, the name had been clipped by the tongues of generations to Aburgham, Aburham, Abraham, Abram. The name was originally derived from the Township of Adburgham, near Wigan, shortened eventually to Abram, the family of Adburghams adjusting their name to that of the Township. Abram Hall, near Wigan, was the original home of the Abrams. In the Testa de Nevill (1216-72), is the first mention of the name. It is stated that Richard de Edburgham held, by gift of Henry II., in fee farm, four bovates of land—as much land as four yoke of oxen could plough in a year. William de Abraham was an Inquisition Juror in 1387. Gilbert de Adburgham was living and held the estate in 1399. The direct line—the name constantly varying in spelling—was extinct about the end of the Sixteenth Century; Thomas Abraham died prior to 1598, leaving two daughters. Mr. Abram was never able to completely connect the collaterals with the younger sons of the direct line. His own genealogical tree he traced to the middle of the Sixteenth Century, the will of Richard Abraham "Senior" [born about 1535] of Crossones [Crossens] being dated 11th December, 1598, proved 4th January 4th, 1599. These ancestors were successively Yeoman and Freeholders of North Meols, near Southport, occupying a farm called Banks, and spelling their name Abram; collateral branches married into the families of Holland, Baydell, Holt, Byrom, and Langton. The Chethams and Sir Bartle Frere have had their descent traced to Mary Abraham, daughter of John Abraham,

of Manchester, who married Edward Chetham in 1683. Mr. Abram's grandfather was James Abram, Yeoman and Leaseholder in North Meols, born in 1778. He was the last occupier of a leasehold tenure for a term of three lives. No doubt the first occupier would be his grandfather, who was born in July, 1720. Mr. W. A. Abram's grandfather was a shrewd man, one with a repute for sagacity on the Country side; his thatched farm with its eight-and-half acres of leasehold stood in what is now a suburb of Southport; it was known by the singular name The Trap. He left his farm to serve in the King's Navy during the French wars; was made deaf in one ear by the cannonading; walked the whole way home from Plymouth to North Meols, and resumed his husbandry. One who knew him, wrote: "He was not the sort of man mentally that most of the Yeomen farmers were. He was very intelligent in matters least understood by agriculturists in his day; was conversant with many things and subjects; used to get up discussions and meetings at his farmhouse on political questions during the controversy on the Corn Laws; regarded by his neighbours, even at a distance, for his knowledge and shrewdness He was of impatient and somewhat fretful temper; could not bear to owe any one a penny." He died in 1871, having almost completed his 93rd year. Mr. W. A. Abram had in his possession a curious family Seal, with Arms thereon. It was of silver, chastely designed, some two hundred years old, bearing the Arms of the original Abram family, though these had not been registered by the Heralds, whose Visitations came later. As given by Flower, in his Lancashire Visitation of 1567—in connection with the pedigree of Holt, of Grislehurst, who is said to have married Isabel, daughter of John Abram, of Abram—they are: *Argent* a chevron *Sable* between three castles triple-

towered *Gules*." This is a true description of the Arms upon the Seal.

The Memoir of Mr. Abram is but half written; I must come upon the omission equivalent to an end. I see him come and go through these pages; the pre-occupied face; the sunny smile; the stern reproof; the impassioned gesture. I hear those tones that could be tender; that knew how, also, to be authoritative and commanding; too much so, no doubt, but it is easy to pass this by, now. His flash of eye lights up to me, I would it could shine upon these pages, illuming words that look dim, when I think of him. The fleecing whiteness at the temples; the lines that Thought had made—a very lightning; the step that grew impatient of its own lagging; the quieter voice that had begun to count the months instead of years, hoping for just *one* Summer the more—these are inwoven in the warp of words; they shuttle in and out; I see them as I lay down my pen.

BLACKBURN CHARACTERS.

I.—"JACK" SALISBURY, AUCTIONEER AND HUMORIST.

AS people advance in life, and the anticipatory "pleasures of hope," sung by one eminent poet, steadily shrink and fail, the retrospective "pleasures of memory," which were the chosen theme of another bard, correspondingly enlarge and accumulate by way of compensation; and of the latter, the diversion of recalling to mind the singularities of some of those who have lived their lives in the same neighbourhood with ourselves is one to which we often have recourse. Among the many hundreds of townsfolk of Blackburn, now gone over to the majority, whom I have known, a few can be selected whose characteristics were sufficiently strong and uncommon to make them suitable subjects for posthumous delineation. I shall try to reduce to verbal definition in these pages the recollections of several towns men of eccentric individuality or of remarkable character and career in the generation which has been passing during the last half-century.

It is a circumstance one can hardly help observing, that oddity of colloquial speech, of general personal appearance and dress, of habit, motion, gait, and manner, do not increase with the growth in numbers of a community, but indeed, tends more and more, in these days of social fusion, to wear out and disappear. When Blackburn did not hold nearly half the number of residents it now contains, it would have been easy for a person well acquainted with the town to name ten or a dozen men and women in the place who were recognized by their neighbours as originals, and, being so, accepted their local reputation, and never put forth the smallest effort to conform themselves to the ordinary standard of behaviour. How many such can be mentioned now? With a pretty numerous circle of acquaintance, I cannot think of more than one or two, and they are not the product of this second half of the Nineteenth Century. The rubbing together of modern town life is destroying individualism. Character which expresses itself in personal singularity is looked upon as an excrescence, which must be removed, if necessary by painful means. Now-a-days, whatever you do you must not give people cause for saying you are peculiar. In modern urban England humanity is put into the loom of conventionalism, and woven to the set pattern. So the student and sketcher of character has to fall back upon his memory of a departed generation, or is driven to seek distinctive types of human kind in out-of-the-way country places, where the process of dressing down all members of a community to the same size and shape has not yet been applied.

There was no lack of either individual or collective originality of character to be met with in the Blackburn of

fifty to seventy years ago. The district had not then been broken into by railroads, and comparatively few strangers visited or settled in it. The natives kept the town's affairs very much in their own hands. Not alone the factory-masters and the shopkeepers, but the majority of the lawyers, land-agents, doctors, schoolmasters, and holders of public offices were at that time Blackburn men. So, too, were the innkeepers as a body. You heard the Lancashire dialect everywhere broadly spoken—in the market; in the inn parlour and commercial room; on the coach and in the exchange; at the shop counter and in the auction room. And if the townsfolk were not ashamed of their native folk-speech, and could not imagine its uncouth sound to unaccustomed ears, they had, too, a familiar and blunt manner of speaking of each other, which was employed and taken equally without offence. Men's and women's Christian names were usually heard in the shortened forms of Tommy and Jemmy, Bobby and Bill, Kester and Ned, Betty, Molly, and Jinny. In some cases nicknames were added, none too complimentary, being allusive to well-known foibles or freaks, and, when once bestowed, were apt to stick.

From the group of Blackburn Characters whom I once knew, but who have most of them been so long dead as to have become part and parcel of local tradition, I select, for my first sketch, a native who was a natural humorist, namely, John Salisbury, or "Jack" Salisbury, as he was generally called by his neighbours. As I write his name, his face and figure rise before me. Rotundity could not be conveniently carried to greater length (I mean *breadth*) in the human form than it was in the person of "Jack." His stature was somewhat low, and his fatness was such that his mediate girth would have about equalled his vertical elevation when

standing. His shoulders were massive as those of fabled Atlas, and his short legs were of the stoutness requisite to sustain the superincumbent weight of body. His face was in shape orbed like the full moon, and his cheeks and pendulous double chin presented a surface so vast that his barber might have been justified in making a special contract at so much per square foot, for the shaving of him. His eyes were full and large, and of a bovine mildness of gaze. The nose was relatively small and subordinate to the facial contour as a whole. I never knew him as a lad (he was about 26 years old, and in business, when I came to Blackburn). He was a constitutionally easy-going, good-natured man. His normal aspect was genial, and suggested a liking for creature comforts, solid or fluid, and for sociality. But whether engaged in his vocation or in the refreshment of the inner man, "Jack" Salisbury was always ready for a bit of pleasantry. You did not find much difficulty in setting him on to make fun of somebody. His occupations were those of an auctioneer and sheriff's officer. The Salisbury family furnished several knights of the hammer to the town. The head of the family was Mr. William Salisbury, who established a good business as auctioneer and appraiser, which he kept going 'till his death, and which is continued by his junior partner, Mr. Hamer. William Salisbury also followed his father, John Salisbury, who had been a cotton-twist sizer, in that business until sizing of warps as a distinct branch of the cotton manufacture went out. Another brother was father of George Salisbury, who assisted his uncle William, and was, for a time, auctioneer on his own account. He emigrated to the United States, and a few years since was practising as a journalist and whisky-storekeeper at Fall River. "Jack"

Salisbury was not so capable or dependable a man of business as William, his father, and his success was less conspicuous. His line was chiefly in sales of household furniture and the stocks of small tradesmen and farmers who had come to grief. Towards the end "Jack" sometimes sold as deputy of his father. I have kept a copy of the sale catalogue of the library of Mr. Wm. Townend Lund (he afterwards perished in the terrible railway catastrophe at Abergele), which was sold at his residence, Garden-street, St. John's, on December 28th and 29th, 1866. The Sale was entrusted to Mr. William Salisbury, but I recollect that it was John who sold the books. And, although the sale took place in mid-winter, and the auctioneer was as hoarse as a raven from a succession of colds, yet his humorous sallies were continuous throughout the two days' sale, and if they did not help the sale, certainly they did not have the opposite effect, for my marked catalogue shows that good prices were obtained for most of the lots. That must have been one of the last important sales at which "Jack" Salisbury officiated, for, within little more than a year, his life was cut off.

Mr. E. Hamer, who now carries on the business founded by Mr. William Salisbury, tells me the following story respecting John Salisbury, which will serve to show that his native wit had its practical side, and could be turned to account, on occasion, in his business. "Jack" Salisbury was once employed by his father to sell a quantity of standing timber in the neighbourhood of Ribchester. The sale was attended by a number of local bobbin-turners, cloggers, and others who were accustomed to buy wood at these sales for use in their respective crafts. As auctioneer, "Jack" first conducted the party over the land to view the

trees marked to be felled and sold, and the inspection terminated at the inn, where, before the sale began, those who were recognized as intending buyers were freely served with bread and meat, cheese, and ale, of which, their appetites being whetted by the previous walk through the woodlands, the company ate and drank their fill. The sale opened with everybody in a genial frame of mind, and the bidding at first was sharp, and the lots went at good prices. But, after a while, the ale which they had imbibed had the effect of inducing drowsiness among the company, and at length bidding ceased entirely, as the bidders all sank into slumber. Numerous lots had yet to be sold, and the auctioneer was bound to finish the sale somehow, after the expense of "sweetening" the buyers. "Jack" was equal to the emergency. He gave a hint to his clerk, and then went on selling just as if his company had been wide awake instead of fast asleep. As each lot was put up, "Jack" took with a nod one or two imaginary bids, and then knocked it down to one or other of the company. In this way, at the close of the sale, every likely buyer had sundry lots booked to him, and they all woke up to hear the auctioneer's thanks for their attendance. The next day, when accounts had to be settled, the men to whom "Jack" had charged these later lots came and asked, "Dud aw buy them theer lots?" "To be seure tha dud," said "Jack"; "tha wod hev um; aw cudn't howd tha back." "Wha, I've no recollecksh un on id." "'Appen nod; but tha bowt um." The fellows had a vague recollection of having been bemuddled with the drink, and dare not dispute "Jack's" word; so they each paid their bills and took the lots which "Jack," with careful regard for the sort of wood they wanted, had knocked down to them.

During at least fifteen years of his life, John Salisbury was a character of some note in Blackburn. He was the "Jack Falstaff" of the community, and he might have sat for the portraiture of the Shakespearean knight as limned by modern artist-illustrators. And, just as his prototype was addicted to copious drinking of "sack" in the sanded kitchens of old alehouses, so our "Jack" indulged in free draughts of beer or other cordials, in those resorts, and, while his health lasted, his company was extremely entertaining. Nor was he an illiterate man. At least, if not in polite literature, he was well read in the dialect literature of Lancashire. He made a special study of the works of John Collier ("Tim Bobbin"), the earliest of our county humorists, and during the Cotton Famine, in January, 1863, he gave a public lecture, as one of a popular series, entitled, "An Hour's Whomly Gossip abeawt th' Lancashire Dialect," which was well appreciated. One might almost say that the mantle of Collier had fallen upon "Jack" Salisbury, so much did his genius for humour resemble that of the earlier satirist.

Most of "Jack's" best things were spoken in the auction-room and in the bar-parlour, and those, after the lapse of a quarter of a century since his death, are forgotten. But he also wrote in the dialect with a facility and homely fidelity of expression displayed by very few writers in the Lancashire vernacular. At intervals during, perhaps, about ten years, from 1857 to 1867, he wrote for the *Blackburn Times* a great number of characteristic criticisms and satires upon local occurrences, under the signature of "Tummas Carter." These were all in the dialect. The comments on men and things were thrown into the form of dialogue betwixt "Tummas" and his "missis," always mentioned as "eawr

Peggy." The latest series of his contributions was headed "Th' Merch o' Intellect," and they were extended, over several years, to about forty-five letters. The last of them appeared in the months from September to December, 1867. "Jack" Salisbury's written dialect was, like his spoken, perfectly easy, natural, and spontaneous. It was the production of a man who habitually talked, and even thought, in the dialect. Many of his liveliest and most exuberant compositions have been lost with the copies of the newspaper in which they were printed, for there is no file of the *Blackburn Times*, from its commencement in 1855 onward for a number years, preserved either in the office of the paper or at the Free Library. But in those which can be looked up—the later ones in the file for 1867—I find numerous references to individuals of odd or notorious character, such as "Jim Hacking," "Dick Clerk," "Lung Charlie," "Owd Tulley Pot," and sundry others whose tricks and escapades from time to time supplied matter for droll narrative or gossip. "Jack" Salisbury had ever one or other of these rough fellows, whose carryings on he watched at close quarters, at hand to be used in his comparisons, and the aptitude of the personal jest or raillery was at once perceived by readers who knew something of the favourite vices of "Jack's" chosen objects. His colloquies of "Tummas" and "Peggy" overflowed with jocularity and abounded in sarcastic touches. Besides its idiomatic richness, the humour owed its point and power to amuse to the personalities I have already mentioned. But his hits were often merely chaffing and seldom spiteful. He knew his men, and how far he could safely hold them up to ridicule. There was discretion in his gibes, and in the selection of his butts. He did not turn the current of his satire upon

people socially important enough to resent the liberties he took with them, or clever enough to retort, upon the humorist, his derisive allusions. To readers whose recollections do not go back so far, I can only convey an idea of "Jack" Salisbury's peculiar style of writing in the dialect by quoting short passages from two or three of his later letters. The first extract refers to a strike of painters in the summer of 1867.

"Tummas," sed eawr Peggy, "are ta writin' to th' *Blegburn Toimes?*" "Aye," aw sed, "theaw's hit th' reight nayle o' th' heyd this toime." "Well," hoo sed, "ger on wi' tha, theawrt as keen o' writin' as Jim Hacking is uv his snuff, an' Dick Clerk o' bein' nasti." Soa, here goas! Eawr Peggy an' me thowt we'd hev a woke tuther mornin,' an' uz wey wur goin' deawn Norgate, ther wur a lot o' paynturs standin' at soid o' Mestur Thompson's Masun's Herms, an' a bonny scolick o' th' "black fleet" abeawt Black Hoss door. "Aye," sed eawr Peggy, "th' 'black fleet' loikes black hosses. But wod wur they dooin' theer?" "Wey," aw ses, "ther on th' strike." "Un wod does thad meon, Tummas?" "Well," aw sed, "ther nod working." "Bud wod's to do uz they wern'd work?" "Becose ther maysters wernd give um wod they want." "Now, now—nur nuboddi els noether! Eh, deer, wod a grand thing it wod be, if ho on us cud hev wod we wanted! Wey iv Mestur Keawnsulur Gregson un his kowd watter sowdgers mut have wot they wanted, ther wodn't be as mitch as a penny chucker to be bowt i' th' kuntri, un way shud ho look as wite uz iv we'd cum eawt uv a bleychin croft. But wod wern'd they work for, Tummas? Hey, theau mun be joakin. Theaw mut uz well tell me uz Mat Bern wud foe eawt wi a point uv ale, or Doctor Robinson let Paypists

uluon. Bud wad dun they want, Tummas?" "Wey," aw sed, "mooar wages." "Wod everi one on um to be paid ulike?" "Aye, thad's id."

In the same letter Peggy is put in mind of "a tayle aw wonst heeard Lung Cherli tell." "Un wot wor id, Peggy?" "Well," hoo sed, "Mestur Cunningham hed a gred big Tum Cat i' his breweri, un id wur scamperin' after a meawse; in id horri to ged eawt o' th' cat's way id tumbled into t' beck o' workin' drink. Tum cums up an' looks at id. Meawse sed, "Lift me eawt o' this beck!" Tum sez, "aw can see nu gud o' id; if aw lift tha eawt ize werri tha, un iv tha stops in theawl be dreawnd." "Well," says th' Meawse, "if tha'll lift me eawt tha *shall* werri ma!" Soa Tum geet owd on id un lifted id eawt; heawever, th' smell o' th' werkin' drink med th' cat sneez, un th' Meawse slipt eawt o' Tum's meawth un nipt into id oyle, tornd id reawnd, un laft at Tum. Tum sed, "Heer, heer, fair play! Dudund tha say ut iv oid lift tha out aw mut werri tha?" "O, aye," sed the Meawse, "that's true enuff, bud tha noes aw wer i' licker then, un bergins us iz med i' licker is woth nowt."

Next week "Tummas Carter" noticed a meeting which had been held by the painters on strike, and in his racy dialect chaffed the speakers — Mestur Dodd, Mestur Mc.Donald, and the chairman, Mestur Rofe Fish. About the latter Peggy asks, "Whoa wor cheermon ut thad meetin'?" Tummas: "Whey, Mestur Rofe Fish." "Wod, that chap uz sells paypur hangings ut soid o' th' silk wayreawse?" "Aye," aw sed. "Eh," sed eawr Peggy, "id puts me i' mind o' Happi Ned; he wonst went wi' th' woife to cherch, un wen they begun o' singin' he brasted off wi' Pop Goas the Weezel. When he geet eawt o' th' cherch, th' woife dud give him a jungal heaw he cud forshame sing

thad i' th' cherch." "Wey," sed Ned, "they wor aw on um singin', un aw thowt aw'd do th' saym, un thad wor a'th' tune us aw noed. It wor saym wi' Rofe Fish, they wor aw tokein', soa, reet or rung, he'd do th' saym."

In another amusing letter, "Tummas Carter" describes a foot-race he saw at the "Royal Park Gardens." It was "a match between Mile Oddie un owd Tulley Pot for won mile, ten peawnd a soide." "Owd Sod lad, eawt o' Sheer Broo, traynd Mile Oddie, un owd Tulley Pot traynd hissel." The race was a swindle, and Tummas, at the finish, observed that Mile Oddie could never catch up to Tulley Pot "bekose he dudn't want to do; they med o' thad square i' bettin'; un old Tulley Pot dud grin when he coom in," while his second, "Owd Sod," "ackshully kussed Tulley Pot." A pleasanter picture is Tummas's description of a Sunday School Procession to and through the Park, in a letter on August 17th, 1867.

Mr. John Almond communicates the following: "Perhaps Mr. Abram will not mind if I attempt to describe a little incident in which Mr. Salisbury characteristically figured, and I was an interested party. We, who are not so young as we used to be, well remember the old theatre in Ainsworth-street, which opened its doors very occasionally, and closed them very abruptly. Few people knew who the place belonged to, but Mr. Salisbury was the agent for it. A few of us fellow-lads, burning with dramatic fire, formed ourselves into an amateur company, with the intention of astounding, first, our friends and neighbours, and eventually the world. We had engaged a room to practice in at the alarming rate of eighteen-pence per week. It was up an entry, and we had to climb a ladder to get into it. Our subscription was a penny each per week. We tried all sorts

of pieces from 'Hamlet' downwards. Our leading actor actually wrote a play for us, the main feature in which was a lamp, the light of which was never known to go out. By this lamp miracles were supposed to be worked, but, for all that, the piece with us did not take on. Then we tried high-class comedy, but the result was no better, and at last we settled down to the 'Charcoal Burner; or, the Dropping Well of Knaresborough'; and, as far as rehearsal went, did fairly well. I remember I was cast for the second low comedy part, and it did not fit me nicely. However, we managed to get the piece in very fair form, and, not seeing the fun of hiding our light any longer, after much consideration we decided to give a performance in the Theatre. The question of ways and means, as to dresses, bills, and advertisements, never entered our heads; we had settled to perform the play. We went—I am not sure we did not all go—at any rate some of us went to see Mr. Salisbury about taking the Theatre. We approached the great man—particularly great to us just then in every way—almost in fear and trembling. We managed to lay our case before him, and to suggest that the cheaper we got the place the better it might prove to everybody concerned. If he had wanted payment in advance the thing would have collapsed at once; but he did no such thing. He met us very kindly indeed, and then said, 'An' wod are yo' gooin' to play?' We told him. 'An' when dun yo' want t' Theayter?' We answered that question also. 'Well, aw dorn'd know wod to do wi' yo' lads, nor wod to cherge yo'.' Then, with one of those sudden impulses for which he was noted, he put one hand in his coat pocket, and, pulling out a key, gave it to us, saying, 'Here! sweep t' place eawt, ged done wi' id an' bring t' *keigh back*, an' id'll be o' reight.' 'Jack' was

wiser than we were. We swept the place out, and it certainly wanted it, and we took the *key back*, but the piece was not performed on that occasion."

John Salisbury died, "after a short and severe illness," at the age of 45 years, April 8th, 1868. Charles Tiplady, who knew him intimately, refers to him in his private diary as "a man of more than average ability." The short newspaper obituary paragraph records that the dead auctioneer "was a gentleman of considerable natural talent, and he possessed an inexhaustible fund of true Lancashire humour. He was a master of the dialect of East Lancashire."

II.—GEORGE DEWHURST, REEDMAKER AND RADICAL.

TO natives of Blackburn who are upwards of fifty years of age, and to those only, will the mention of the name of George Dewhurst revive distinct recollections; indeed, none, except a few octogenarians who have retained their memories, can think of George Dewhurst as he figured in the party-political strife of the town during a peculiarly exciting period, including the twenty years from 1816 to 1836. No more singular, strong, self-asserting, and self-depending character than George Dewhurst has appeared in Blackburn in the Nineteenth Century. It was in political agitation and warfare, and in the contentions arising out of the direction of local affairs, that he bore a stout and strenuous part, and engaged himself to acts which sometimes had consequences momentous to others and painful to himself. George Dewhurst, in his convictions, was a Radical of Radicals. He was an inextinguishable torch of Radicalism in the night-time which preceded its heyday of aggrandisement and ascendency. One who had watched the career of this fearless democrat from its beginning, and was entitled to speak for the Reformers of the town as a party (the late Mr. John Sparrow), once publicly pronounced George Dewhurst to have been "the father of Reform in Blackburn." A biographical sketch of him may, therefore,

be not unacceptable to local politicians of the advanced school.

George Dewhurst was a politician purely, I say, and neither an eccentric, a humorist, nor a prodigy of talent in any other sphere of human achievement. I must accordingly describe him as a political mover and partisan. I simply wish to present the most creditable traits of a former townsman whom I believe to have been sincere and unselfish in his motive, even when he was most extreme in his invectives against the Government of his time, and in his incitements to the discontented multitudes of the governed. It is a poor spirit that grudges a word of frank appreciation of the redeeming qualities of a man whose opinions differed from ours, even after he has been long dead, and the burning questions over which we wrestled have been settled or have burnt themselves out.

The first time I saw George Dewhurst is a year or two more than forty years since. He was standing in the Market Place one day, talking to a neighbour, as I was passing, when someone named him and I overheard. He was an old man then, of about sixty years of age, and his aspect was quiet and sober ; but, on enquiry, I learnt that he had once been almost a revolutionist, and that he had endured imprisonment and other hard penalties of the law, for his resistance to the powers that be. I have a faint recollection of his personality, as he appeared in the last years of his life ; and he has now been dead thirty-six years. He was not a bit like the typical demagogue of the platform and the debating room—tall, thin, bony, cadaverous, with close-buttoned coat, knit brows, fierce eyes, shaven chin, heavy black moustache and long hair parted on mid-forehead and combed behind the ears. George Dewhurst

had no such theatrical make-up. There is not a plodding, matter-of-fact tradesman in Blackburn to-day, who looks less like a conspirator than George Dewhurst did at the age of 60. He seemed what he was, when "off" the political stump, a blunt-mannered Lancashire man of the class of small tradesmen in a country town. He wore an old-fashioned frock-coat with side pockets, and a broad-brimmed hat. In stature he was somewhat short, in build square and broad-set. His head was above average size, and well-proportioned; his face full; his hair and trimmed side-whiskers grey, when I knew him; his complexion pale; his features clearly cut, and eyes expressive of keen intelligence, with a mouth indicating stubborn resolution. A photograph of him is preserved by a grand-daughter, Mrs. Ann Smith, wife of Mr. T. C. Smith, of Barton Street. His whole bearing was that of a man who trusted to his native sense and force of will, and not to inherited social position, for the influence he wielded.

The subjoined particulars of the events of his career do not by any means exhaust its stirring incidents. George Dewhurst was born in or about the year 1790. As a lad he acquired the handicraft, which he followed through life, of a reedmaker—an old trade subsidiary to the local calico-weaving industry. England's great continental wars with Bonaparte were being waged in his youth and early manhood, and the burdens laid upon the nation were very heavy. About the time that Dewhurst reached man's estate, the labouring populations of these Northern Counties were in a state of furious resentment against the master manufacturers who were developing the factory system. It was an extension of the "Luddites'" rising in the Midlands in 1811. Some rapacious attacks upon property, accompanied

by threats against obnoxious persons, and more than one murder, occurred on the Lancashire and Yorkshire border. At the close of the war, in 1815, the stagnation of all manufacturing trades ensued, and the distress amongst the people was dreadful and long-continued. At length the starving populace were roused to a pitch of dangerous rage against the Government and Legislature. The Corn Tax which had been levied aggravated the want and wretchedness which prevailed amongst the cottagers, and a bitter cry went up for its repeal. This was the origin of the political upheaval in Lancashire which, commencing in 1816, lasted several years, all the time menacing revolution, filling the propertied classes with alarm, and as it grew more portentous in its manifestations, causing the Government and the magistracy, under the influence of panic, to resort to measures of excessive severity in repressing the organized and tumultuous demonstrations of the disaffected section of the industrial class.

Into this agitation George Dewhurst threw himself with a heat and daring which did not permit him to count the cost. The Hundred of Blackburn was a centre of what was in intention and overt act insurrection against the King's Government, prompted by despair of redress of grievances by an unreformed Parliament. George Dewhurst was the hardiest spirit the Radicalism of Blackburn furnished for the perilous position of leader of the movement in this district. The moderate reformers held rigidly aloof, foreseeing the evil and danger. The Pilkingtons, Eccles's, Turners, Haughtons, and a few other respectable families who were not reckoned as Pittites or Tories, were too cautious and cool to think of joining hands with the admirers of Harry Hunt, who rashly gave out that they

relied in their contest with the authorities upon the force of undisciplined numbers of hungry peasants, men and lads. George Dewhurst promoted the open-air meeting on Factory Hill, in 1816, to ventilate the political abuses which the Radicals aimed to extirpate; and other meetings held in the ensuing three years in the town and parish, and in other populous parts of North-East Lancashire He began to speak at both the larger and lesser gatherings, and gradually became an effective platform orator by dint of earnestness, downrightness, and the use of plain, forceful Saxon words, understood and felt by the most illiterate of his hearers.

The Radical agitation in this country went on and increased through the years 1817 and 1818, and its catastrophe befel in 1819, in the collision betwixt the Yeomanry Cavalry and the masses of partisans gathered from all parts of Lancashire to hear Harry Hunt, at Peter's Field, Manchester. Simultaneously, the Government struck at the leaders of the seditious conspiracy (as it was held to be) in other localities. The Magistrates of Blackburn Hundred had kept a vigilant eye on the doings of George Dewhurst, of Blackburn whom they considered to be one of the most mischievous of the organizers of the revolt, because he was actuated by deep conviction, and was no mere wandering adventurer, but a settled tradesman. On November 15th, 1819, Mr. George Dewhurst attended and addressed a great meeting of Radicals, chiefly hand-loom weavers and colliers, of the Burnley district, held in a field near Burnley, and a few days after, for words said to have been spoken by him there, he was taken into custody, on the charge of treason.

The *Blackburn Mail* of 8th December, 1819, reports the

arrest, preliminary examination by the local magistrates, and committal for trial at Lancaster Assizes, of Mr. George Dewhurst and several of his political associates:—"On Thursday evening last, December 2nd, George Dewhurst, reedmaker, John Adamson, tailor, Joseph Fletcher, tailor, and two other men in custody, were examined before the Rev. T. D. Whitaker, LL.D., and Joseph Feilden, Esq., when they were severally committed to Preston House of Correction for further examination. The prisoners Dewhurst, Fletcher, and Adamson are charged with having, on the 15th November last, at Habergham Eaves, near Burnley, traitorously conspired and combined together, with other wicked and traitorous persons, to the number of 10,000 and upwards, and, in pursuance of the said traitorous conspiracy, at the time and place aforesaid, with having armed themselves with divers pikes, pistols, clubs, staves, and other offensive weapons, and with having thereby, then and there, levied war against the King, in order, by force and constraint, to compel his said Majesty to change his measures and councils, and to intimidate and overawe the Houses of Parliament." "On Friday the above persons underwent a second examination at Preston, before Colonel Hargreaves, when Dewhurst, Fletcher, and Adamson were committed to Lancaster Castle on a charge of High Treason." The tidings of the arrest and committal of their courageous leader and spokesman quickly circulated amongst the Blackburn Radicals, and created the greatest excitement and indignation.

The trial of these political prisoners took place at Lancaster Assizes, April 1st, 1820. The prisoners were ably defended by Mr. Williams. The jury returned a verdict of guilty against them and others, but the prosecution

had abandoned the counts of the indictment which related to the conspiracy, on the ground of want of evidence. George Dewhurst was sentenced to two years' imprisonment in Lancaster county jail, and Adamson and Fletcher to shorter terms.

I have had lent to me by Mr. Dewhurst's grand-daughter, Mrs. Smith, a letter of peculiar interest which he wrote in August, 1821, in his cell in Lancaster Castle, when he had served about seventeen months of his two years' term of imprisonment. The letter is lengthy, and cannot be printed entire, but extracts from it are worth publishing, as indicating the thoughts and state of feeling of this ardent politician during his confinement. George Dewhurst had left his young children in charge of his own parents, who were then both alive and residing in Blackburn. The children numbered four—two boys, Hanson, and another who died whilst the father was in prison, and two girls—Alice and Mary. George Dewhurst was a widower at the date of his conviction in 1820. His brothers, John and Henry, sisters, Catherine, Betty, and Alice, are mentioned in the letter, with other kinsfolk and friends. The first portion of the letter relates to family matters; to brother John's letter; to his father's trouble from his old disorder, rheumatism; to his boy Hanson's education; to unworthy conduct by certain former political associates, which he regrets; and to a friend, C. Cottam, reedmaker, who had called to see him in the county jail, and seemed "timid" as though "horrified" at the thought of human beings living in such a place for a number of years, "confined within a yard about twenty yards long and ten broad." The prisoner wonders what can be the reason why some of his old acquaintances do not write; fancies that "perhaps they are

afraid of fatiguing me with reading an epistle." "Well, my time will soon be over, and then we shall see." There is a message to "Aunt Alice from Newcastle," who, having buried her husband, is coming to reside in Blackburn. As to his business, brother John in his letter had mentioned some situations in the town that would be likely for a shop for George and himself, and George remarks:—"I shall establish myself as near the centre of the town as I possibly can' but until nearer the completion of my sentence you don't need to stir about the matter. I am not so sanguine as brother in thinking that I shall have an increase of work on my return; I have no such hopes; I only wish that I may have the same as I had when arrested." Mr. Dewhurst's mother and father-in-law, James Green, proposed to go to Lancaster Castle in order to see him; but, he writes, "I could not wish to see either of them in my present unfortunate situation, for what pleasure could any one of us take in an interview under such cruel restrictions? Mr. Higgin the elder did promise me without any solicitation that, if you did come, I should have the indulgence of going into the passage leading to the Round House. I thanked him"—but "I hope you will not be induced to come this long journey. We could not talk over matters relating to business without having a third person at our elbow, and that would be disagreeable."

George Dewhurst goes on to inform his father and mother that he addressed a memorial to the Annual Meeting of County Justices, held at Preston, in June. It was referred to the Visiting Justices, who had not yet come to a decision. He sends a copy of the petition. It contains these passages:—"I was arrested the 2nd day of December, 1819, upon a charge of high treason, for attending

a legal and peaceable meeting at Burnley. Afterwards I was committed to this jail, and kept under that dreadful charge for 12 weeks. At the following Assizes I was tried for a misdemeanour, found guilty, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment in this jail. That I have been confined to the Crown side of the prison ever since, and subjected to the same privations and restrictions as *felons* and the Bridewell prisoners are. The yard which is allotted for walking in is small, and is surrounded with such high buildings that the air breathed therein" is very unwholesome. "The restrictions thought necessary for the government of the Crown prisoners have prevented me from yielding to the repeated solicitations of my parents, who are very anxious that they and my children may come to see me; but it would be a useless journey of 30 to 40 miles to see each other through a small aperture of a door." "Death has for ever deprived me of one boy, about seven years old, since I came here. I appeal to you as fathers, whether my anxiety to see my children will not be greater in consequence of that event. I shall not speak of my own conduct during my incarceration, but I will refer you to the keepers. I again anxiously request you will give directions for my removal, and by so doing you will confer an unspeakable obligation upon your unfortunate applicant, GEORGE DEWHURST." To Edmund Hornby, Esq., M.P., a visiting Justice, Mr. Dewhurst forwarded the application, along with an appeal to him personally for his interposition in his behalf, and acknowledges that Mr. Hornby had "done his best to ameliorate the condition of one whose cruel persecution and long imprisonment had originated solely because he had dared to think and speak against the powers that be." Dewhurst concludes his letter

in these words :—" My time will soon be over. There are only 33 weeks this day to serve, and though imprisonment is a great affliction, yet the days and weeks glide swiftly over. While I can hear of your and my children's health, I am as contented as the situation will admit. I am sending by the bearer four pairs of socks, two pairs for Alice and two for Mary. Give my love to them, and tell them that I am always thinking of them; also to Hanson. I have no doubt but he and his sisters are fine children." He had hoped that on the coronation of the King (George IV.) pardons might be granted to State prisoners, according to precedents, but it had not been so. " On Coronation Day the prisoners on the Crown side had each 1lb. of mutton and two pints of beer, one pint at noon and the other at night; and it was the first that I have had since I came here. We spent the day cheerfully." " Remember me to Mrs. Hitchen [the lady he wedded later in 1823], and her daughters; also to the Miss Greenwoods; Mr. and Mrs. Slater, Mr. and Mrs. Martin, and families; also to Thomas and Edmund Smalley; Mr. and Mrs. Austin, John Farnell, William Craig, Abraham Carter, and James Ramsbottom, and to those friends who may at any time inquire after me. My thanks and respects to brother John for his occasional letters, also to his wife; sister Catherine and family, brother Henry, sisters Betty and Alice. My dear father and mother. I shall now conclude, hoping that you are in good health, and spirits, as I am at present, with my thanks to you for your attention to the children and me. I remain, your unfortunate son, GEORGE DEWHURST."

Mr. John Wilding informs me that his father, the late Mr. Richard Wilding, who knew Mr. George Dewhurst well, had heard the statement that whilst he was imprisoned

in Lancaster Castle George Dewhurst taught himself French; and that he was so much on the alert in communicating to the Government by formal complaint any abuses discovered by him within the prison, that the Governor of Lancaster Castle was fain to be relieved of his presence when his term expired.

George Dewhurst duly served his term in the county prison, and it would be the Spring of 1822 when he was released. He was welcomed home by his friends, and he showed that his two years' confinement in jail had not broken his indomitable spirit. The agitation, however, had subsided, and Mr. Dewhurst was glad to be able to bestow his attention upon his business, which must have been in suspension during his imprisonment. The following year he remarried. "November 9, 1823, married, Mr. George Dewhurst, reedmaker, to Mrs. Hitchen, both of Blackburn." Later, George Dewhurst set sail to America. I think it may have been during the distress of 1826-7, when trade of all kinds was at a standstill in Blackburn. A voyage across the Atlantic was a more serious affair seventy years since than now, and when our doughty Reformer departed for the United States, both friends and political adversaries supposed he was going to stay. But within a few years he returned to Blackburn and settled to his old trade in the old spot. Some of his neighbours rallied him a little on having discovered that even the American Republic was no better than, if so good as, king-lord-squire-and-parson-ridden England for a land to live in.

That formidable and unsparing political censor of his time, William Cobbett, visited Lancashire in the winter of 1831-2, and came to Blackburn, where he stayed several

days. Here he made the acquaintance of George Dewhurst. Being a lover and cultivator of flowers, Cobbett procured from Mr. Dewhurst and other friends in Blackburn and Bolton, who at that time were growers of the old-fashioned garden flowers once so much thought of by amateurs, for their cottage-gardens, such as dahlias, pinks, carnations, auriculas and polyanthuses, a quantity of roots which he took away with him for his garden at his home in the South of England. In the following June (1832), Cobbett inserted in his "Register" a short article addressed to his Lancashire friends, and particularly to Mr. George Dewhurst, with the object of dissuading him from supporting Dr. Bowring as candidate for Blackburn—Bowring and Cobbett being mutually inimical. This address is interesting from its incidental reference to flower-culture in Blackburn sixty years since. It was reproduced from the "Register" by some opponents of Bowring here, in the form of an election squib, printed by T. Rogerson, of which I have a copy in my collections :—

"*To Flower-Friends at Bolton and Blackburn.*—If I had, during the almost four months that I spent in the North, last winter, done nothing but collected the *Auriculas, Polyanthuses, Pinks, and Carnations*, which I got at these two towns, I should have thought the time well spent. The two former, though they had to undergo so severe a removal, and at so late a season, blowed pretty strongly, and are very fine; but the *Pinks*, which are now in bloom (20th June), are far more beautiful than any that I ever saw before. I have, all my life long, been a flower admirer, and a flower cultivator, from the time that I used to carry dirt, in the lap of my little smock-frock, to put on the ledge of a

sand-rock for primroses and violets and cowslips to grow in, and I have never seen such beautiful flowers as these pinks from Blackburn and Bolton; which, however, I cannot look at and smell without feeling inexpressible disgust at the thought that the public-spirited towns from which they came should be insulted with the attempt at imposing upon them, as representatives, such men as Bowring and Torrens, two *executors* and two advocates of that Bill which exposes the dead bodies of the poor to be SOLD, and cut up, and flung out to be eaten by dogs. Foh! for God's sake, let not the sweet odour of these beautiful Blackburn and Bolton pinks be overpowered in my nostrils by the results of greedily-devoured taxes and Greek-pies, and by the stench of poor men's putrid bodies, chopped up in virtue of Warburton's horrid Bill, which Bill was assented to by Torrens, and even eulogised by Bowring; by the former in his place in Parliament, and by the latter in the *Westminster Review*, of which he is the editor. What! and am I doomed to see Mr. DEWHURST, who obligingly got me these very pinks, at Blackburn—am I doomed to see him the advocate of this Bowring, who is actually in the pay of Government, or was so but only the other day, and who, of course, is ready to be so again? A good man, as Mr. Dewhurst always has been, may commit error from deception, but such a man, when undeceived, will never persevere in the error."

At the first Parliamentary Election in Blackburn after the creation of Blackburn a Parliamentary Borough, electing two Members, by the Reform Act of 1832, Mr. George Dewhurst was in the thick of the contest. The remonstrances of Cobbett did not restrain Mr. George Dewhurst in the least from casting in his lot with Bowring.

But a short time before the campaign opened, in the summer of 1832, Mr. Dewhurst had become involved in a trouble which at one stage of it seemed likely to withdraw him from the scene during the election. Always willing to plead the cause of the poor, he had been induced rather imprudently to attach his name to the publication of a serious charge against Mr. John Brindle, Governor of the Mellor Workhouse, of inhuman treatment of a pauper woman, Ann Broughton, wife of John, who was taken into the house to be confined. The letter signed by Mr. George Dewhurst, containing the charge, appeared in the *Blackburn Gazette* in May, 1832. The official accused brought an action against Mr. Dewhurst for libel. Speaking at a political meeting in July, 1832, Mr. Dewhurst referred with bitterness to "the Castlereagh faction who had sent him to prison, and were again trying to crush him, having prepared a bill of indictment against him for having written the truth. He declared he would defend the truth, and although they might send him to prison again, he would never submit to tyranny." In September Mr. George Dewhurst was indicted at Preston Sessions, and a true bill for libel was found. The political friends of Mr. Dewhurst, both Radicals and the moderate Liberals, now came to his support, and on October 10th a public meeting of inhabitants was held in the New Inn, at which Mr. Thomas Wilcock presided, "to condemn the proceedings against Mr. George Dewhurst, under the name of libel." A committee was chosen to obtain subscriptions in support of Mr. Dewhurst, consisting of Messrs. James Pilkington, George Jackson, Thomas Wilcock, Benjamin Barton, John Burrell, Henry Hilton, and John Sparrow. It was on that occasion that the late Mr. John Sparrow paid a

high tribute to Mr. George Dewhurst, whom he had previously known for a length of time. Mr. Sparrow said that Mr. Dewhurst "was a man of the nicest honour, and most uncompromising independence." A sum of £40 17s. 6d. was subscribed in the meeting towards the charge of Mr. Dewhurst's defence of the action. It was not tried until three months after the General Election, and was then taken to Lancaster Assizes, Wednesday, March 27th, 1833. The case was entitled "*The King v. George Dewhurst, for Libel.*" Mr. Justice Alderson was on the bench. Mr. Addison was for the prosecution, and Mr. Alexander for the defence. An affidavit by the defendant, George Dewhurst, was put in, that he was besought to publish the statement by Abraham Pilkington, father of the woman who had complained of cruel usage at the Mellor Workhouse, and he was reluctant to do so, but at last yielded to the entreaties, and took the statement and sent it to the newspaper. The verdict of the jury was that a libel had been published by George Dewhurst. Judge Alderson sentenced him to pay a fine of £10 to the King, and to give sureties to keep the peace for twelve months. The fine was immediately paid, and Mr. Dewhurst was free.

During the year 1832—the year of Blackburn's birth as a political entity—Mr. George Dewhurst was the busiest and most continually in evidence of local politicians, not even excepting Mr. William Henry Hornby, senior, then the militant and unwearied organizer of the Tory party in the town. Mr. Hornby worked as hard as Mr. Dewhurst, but he did not speak so frequently. In February of that year, Mr. Dewhurst had spoken at a meeting to protest against the coercive measures of Earl Grey's Government in Ireland.

How history repeats itself! July 18th, Mr. Harry Hunt, the Radical orator, came to Blackburn, when 12,000 people mustered to receive and hear him. After Hunt, Mr. George Dewhurst was chief speaker, and observed that Hunt had given qualified praise to Dr. Bowring. In July, when Mr. William Turner came out as Whig candidate, Mr. George Dewhurst confronted him, speaking from a window of Mr. Clemesha's shop, opposite Mr. Turner's Committee Room in the Old Bull Inn. He put several questions to Mr. Turner, framed so as to take the measure of his Liberalism, and Mr. Turner answered them. Then Mr. Dewhurst crossed over to the Old Bull, and from the next window to that occupied by Mr. Turner harangued the crowd. On Dr. Bowring's first public entry into Blackburn, Mr. George Dewhurst was foremost in the reception, and called for cheers for the Doctor. August 8th, a dinner to Dr. Bowring was given at the New Inn, and Mr. George Dewhurst spoke to the toast of "Lafayette and the Friends of Freedom in France." In the last week of November Harry Hunt was again in Blackburn, and he and Mr. George Dewhurst addressed the crowd in the Old Market Place. The *Blackburn Alfred*, in its report of the Nomination on Tuesday, December 11th, 1832, states that "the celebrated Mr. George Dewhurst had ensconced himself alone on the space on the outer side of the rail defending the front of the hustings, and there acted as fugleman for the multitude, shrugging his shoulders when a groan was required, and waving his hand when it suited his good pleasure that approbation should be bestowed." In the course of the proceedings he put a series of ten questions to each of the candidates. In the polling, Dr. Bowring was rejected by a small majority of the limited electorate of 600 voters under the £10 franchise, which

excluded the working-men amongst whom he was undoubtedly popular. Mr. George Dewhurst was much chagrined by the defeat of his man, and, speaking after the declaration of the poll, he censured the successful candidates, Messrs. William Feilden and William Turner, for their conduct towards Dr. Bowring. The Whigs and Tories had, as he bitterly declared, combined their voting power to exclude the Radical.

At that period of his life, Mr. George Dewhurst was prominent in local parochial affairs, in vigorous strictures upon the action of the Wardens of the Parish Church, the chapels-of-ease in the town and the chapelries within the parish, in running up heavy bills for dinners and wines after their meetings. At the Vestry Meeting held on Sept. 6th, 1832, he opposed the adoption of the Churchwardens' accounts, and, on the items of allowance to the wardens, asked, "Is it not high time, now that the Dissenters are so numerous, for such expenses to be defrayed by those who incur them? Otherwise, the wardens should be deprived of the parish pudding. The Select Vestry do their duty in a most creditable manner, yet they have no pudding." He said that he had no hostility to the Church. "I am a Dissenter, although there is no place of worship I can go to in the town, being a Unitarian; and I look with respect upon the ministers of the Church, provided I see they do their duty." On all these occasions Mr. George Dewhurst seems to have displayed not only great courage, but self-command, and he would, if necessary, stand up to an intolerant crowd and claim a fair hearing for opponents. In rebuking the wardens' extravagance in eating and drinking at the ratepayers' cost, he carried the town with him, Churchmen as well as Dissenters; and it was a well-

known Churchman who wrote a satirical rhyme on the occasion, in which Mr. Dewhurst is complimented :—

> "Will none rise up them [the Wardens] to oppose?"—
> Some men began a-swearing.
> Just then George Dewhurst boldly rose,
> At which they fell to cheering.
> On right and wrong a speech he made;
> The Wardens got no pity;
> For he proposed the bills be laid
> Before a picked Committee.
> The names were read, the motion put,
> Not one dissent appearing,
> The multitude sent up a shout,
> And quickly off were steering."

At the next General Election, in 1835, George Dewhurst stepped to the front, and strove hard to win a seat for Dr. Bowring, who again stood, but was fourteen votes short of winning. In 1841 the old Radical was not very active in the election, not caring for Mr. William Turner personally. In subsequent contests whilst he lived his voice was heard in counsel on the Liberal side. His Radicalism did not fail with the continued demand upon it, but, like many men, his views were chastened somewhat as he advanced in years, and, as reforms progressed, he was perhaps satisfied that Britons could secure all the rights and liberties they wanted without transforming their old political system. Free speech, for which he had battled and borne the harshest penalties of the law, he saw conceded and enjoyed without stint.

Mr. George W. Whewell, printer, of Clitheroe, whose father, William Whewell (printer, in Blackburn, with the late Mr. Tiplady and Mr. Walkden), married a daughter of George Dewhurst, writes :—" I am very proud to possess a valuable silver two-handled cup, which was presented to George Dewhurst. It is inscribed :—'Presented to Mr. George Dewhurst by the Radical Reformers of Blackburn, as a

testimony of the high estimation in which his exertions in the cause of the People are held by his compatriots. The People united are omnipotent.' "

On the movement for the incorporation of Blackburn in 1851, Mr. George Dewhurst, as an experienced and respected townsman, was placed upon the Committee for carrying out the change, of which the late Mr. W. H. Hornby was elected chairman, and at the first election of members to constitute the new Town Council, in November, 1851, the veteran Reformer was elected a Councilman, for St. Paul's Ward, his colleagues from that ward being Messrs. James Cunningham, John Railton, R. R. Jackson, James Pilkington, and Miles Baron.

Mr. George Dewhurst died, aged 67 years, in the house in Queen Street, which he had lived at so long, on the 14th of August, 1857. He was still at the time of his death Councillor for St. Paul's Ward. He was buried in the Cemetery, then recently opened, on the 19th of August. Mr. Charles Tiplady in his Diary refers to him as "a man noted in his day for Reform principles." He had outlived the personal enmity of political adversaries, and by the Radicals he was venerated in his old age. Some while after his death, a number of his friends contributed the cost of a memorial of the staunch old Radical, which took the form of a granite drinking fountain, placed in the wall of the Market House at the west end near the tower, inscribed :—

"1858. Erected by the Friends of the late George Dewhurst."

Of Mr. George Dewhurst's two daughters, one married the late Mr. William Whewell, and the other was wife

of the late Mr. William Durham. His son, Mr. Hanson Dewhurst, was an active Oddfellow in the Blackburn District, and held the office of District C.S. in 1849, when the A.M.C. was held in Blackburn, but was at the time laid aside by dangerous illness, and Mr. C. Tiplady acted in his stead. Miss Ann Dewhurst and another sister of Mr. George Dewhurst were milliners, and carried on the business in the shop, 34, Northgate, now occupied by Mr. C. Bramwell, the barber.

III.—"DICKY" DUGDALE, SOLDIER, ENGRAVER, AND POET.

A BIG, burly, brown-complexioned, somewhat top-heavy-built man, with a head and face to match a massive frame, dark eyes, glancing beneath bushy brows; a large, assertive mouth; hair which had been black now grey and thin, exposing a capacious cranium; a countenance that seemed formed to reflect strong passions, and a roll of curly grey beard under the chin; striding along in a lumbering gait, with the help of a thick crooked stick. Such was the outward semblance of Richard Dugdale (best known as "Dicky" Dugdale to his cronies), as he was seen in the streets of Blackburn in the middle years of the century. When dressed in his every-day clothes, he would have passed for a farmer from a rural township, come to town to buy or sell cattle at a fair. A something in his movement as he walked of military swagger might have conveyed to the close observer the suggestion that he had been a soldier in his young manhood; but no one looking at him would have guessed that a man of his stalwart proportions had for more than thirty years, at the time of which we speak, been engaged in a sedentary indoor craft, or that those large hands of his, with their thick fingers, had been trained to a skill that was surprising in the delicate manipulation of the engraver's fine-pointed tools. Yet Richard

Dugdale was both a discharged soldier of lengthened service, and an engraver of quite exceptional aptitude for the minutest work that belongs to the art of lettering or delineation of figures or geometric diagrams on the polished surface of the finer metals. But, what was still more unexpected from his aspect, Richard Dugdale was a poet to boot—a reader and critic of poetry, and a writer of it too, of some confident pretensions. Altogether he was a character of no little singularity, and his early history had been so adventurous and chequered in its early chapters that a sketch of it may not be destitute of interest.

Richard Dugdale was not a native of Blackburn, and it was not before he had reached the age of thirty-six, or thereabouts, that he came hither to settle. He was born in Mitton, near Clitheroe, in the year 1790. In childhood he became an inmate of the workhouse of the parish, and as a boy he endured all the kicks and cuffs which in those times fell to the share of a parish apprentice. In *Oliver Twist*, Dickens has depicted the woes of such a lot, but the Mitton Workhouse, when the hapless urchin, Dick Dugdale, was immured there, was in the skin-flint severity of its regimen several degrees worse than the "House" of which Dickens's little hero was the inmate; for whilst Oliver Twist did get one serving of thin porridge or gruel each morning, young Dugdale used to relate that at the parochial institution where he was nurtured he on many a day got nothing to appease hunger's gnawings save a little meal which he contrived to snatch surreptitiously from the workhouse meal-chest. The work at which he was employed was as hard and long-continued as the victuals were scanty and coarse. When he arrived at the age of fourteen he felt the pauper yoke too galling to be any longer borne, and he ran away.

Whether the fugitive was chased is not recorded, but if so he was not caught. He soon ascertained that there was no opening for the likes of him in any peaceful industry, and that he must either starve or enlist for a soldier. So he took the shilling and put on the King's uniform. A tall, big-boned lad, he was considered fit for the army, although he was so young. The war with France under the first Napoleon had been resumed, and men were much needed for the army and navy. Nothing is remembered by any of Richard Dugdale's descendants of any campaigns abroad in which he served in the years of his soldier life, but he was stationed much of his time in Ireland and Scotland. As a parish apprentice he had never received a day's schooling, and when he joined his regiment he was not merely unable to write or read, but did not even know his letters. Some of his comrades taught him them when off duty, without book or board, by tracing the letters with a stick upon the sand. It was thus that the lad picked up the rudiments of knowledge. He was a quick learner, and before he quitted the army he had acquired proficiency in reading, and had read such books as he could lay his hands on ; also, he could write a neat hand, and had somehow discovered and developed a peculiar skill in the use of the graver. It is truly extraordinary how one who had been so grossly neglected and was almost grown up before he had a chance of learning anything whatever, should, whilst serving as a private soldier during war-time, have taught himself to do creditable work in so fine an art as that of engraving upon silver or copper. This, however, Richard Dugdale did, and the fact alone suffices to stamp him a remarkable man.

Richard Dugdale possessed a by no means tractable spirit, so that he frequently got into trouble when a soldier.

The petty tyranny of the officers, especially of the non-commissioned officers, over the common soldier was intolerable, and Dick, like others among his comrades, was apt to be enraged by it and to commit acts of insubordination which brought down upon him condign punishment. After one of these incidents, Dick deserted. His regiment was posted at one of the stations in Ireland. He made his way to some Irish port, got on board a vessel crossing the Channel, and was landed at a Lancashire port, whence he trudged to Clitheroe, in the neighbourhood of his birthplace. He lurked about Clitheroe a while, and no one excepting the landlord of a certain public-house knew his secret, that he was a soldier who had deserted. But he happened to fall out with a man who came to that house, and he, listening, overheard talk betwixt the landlord and Richard Dugdale which disclosed the position of the latter, and at once gave information to the authorities. Dugdale was arrested and identified, and might have been shot, or at least flogged, for the punishment of deserters was more rigorous formerly than now. But two or three gentlemen of influence residing near Clitheroe had heard of Richard Dugdale, and they compassionated and interceded for him. They petitioned the Duke of York, the Commander-in-Chief, who responded that the court-martial on Dugdale would be held, but the sentence would not be carried into effect. Dick was not in favour with his Colonel, who knew his irascible temper, which impelled him to resent too oppressive usage, and on receiving the order respecting him, he took umbrage, and would not hold a court-martial since it might not be executed. Richard Dugdale rejoined his regiment. It was the 91st Highlanders, a famous Scottish regiment.

The service in the ranks of Richard Dugdale extended

over perhaps ten or eleven years. His daughter, Mrs. Tempo, thinks that he was not engaged in any of the campaigns of the British army in the Peninsula, nor in the last decisive battle of the war at Waterloo. But it is certain that he served for a time under the Duke of Wellington, whom he remembered well, and how strict was the discipline he enforced in his command. The 91st Highlanders formed a portion of the British army of occupation in France after Waterloo and the fall of Napoleon. Richard Dugdale marched through France with his regiment, and saw a good deal of the French people in that crisis of their history, whilst in camp or garrison near Paris, or in other French fortresses. When France was settled and the Allied forces were withdrawn, a great reduction of the British army was ordered, and I conclude that it was on that general dismissal of men that Richard Dugdale received his discharge. If so, he terminated his military service about the year 1816 or 1817, at the age of twenty-six or so.

It is probable that his regiment was quartered in Scotland when he left the service, and it was in Scotland that he first sought employment whereby he could support himself. I mentioned that he had begun to practice engraving whilst he was in the army, originally working upon wood. Later he undertook small jobs for the officers and for several of the private soldiers, such as cutting their names upon watches, knife-hafts, &c. His cleverness with the graver must even then have been considerable, for when the officers of the 91st Highlanders on one occasion presented a silver snuff-box of fine workmanship to the Prince Regent, Richard Dugdale was entrusted with the engraving of the inscription upon the lid of the snuff-box, and executed it in a worthy style. On giving up soldiering, Richard Dugdale

resolved to try and get a living by the use of his talent in engraving. The first gentleman in Scotland to notice and encourage him was Dr. S. Richardson, of Newton Stewart, and he earned his first money in payment for the engraving of the doctor's plate. As long as he lived, Mr. Dugdale gratefully regarded his benefactor, who also remained his friend and correspondent for many years. An engraved portrait of Dr. Richardson was conspicuous upon the wall of his parlour, and is now in possession of his daughter. My subject spent some years in Scotland, and afterwards removed into Lancashire.

The year 1826 is indicated as the date of starting of the business of engraver and copper-plate printer in Blackburn by Mr. Richard Dugdale, which is still going on, and has been continued since his retirement and death by his son and grandson. In a small way, with very limited capital, he commenced in a cellar in Ainsworth-street. He was thirty-six years old e'er he had gained this slight footing in trade. But he had persistence as well as ability in his chosen art, and custom gradually increased. He moved from Ainsworth-street to premises in the court between Richmond-terrace and Richmond-hill; and thence to the house and shop in Preston New-road, at the junction of Strawberry Bank, where he finally fixed his place of operations. The late Roger Pomfret built these premises, and two or three houses round the corner of Strawberry bank, some time about 1840 to 1845. The building has recently been taken down, and several shops built upon the site. Here, for twenty years or more, Richard Dugdale pursued his calling, and might have been seen daily, sitting at his bench behind the shop window, working upon one of the thousands of gold, silver, and copper plates and other articles

which he inscribed and ornamented during his lifetime. He wrought steadily until he attained seventy-five years, and had not ceased to handle the graver at eighty years. The most prosperous years were from 1850 to 1870. He had, at the age of sixty, at last succeeded in removing poverty's "invidious bar," and had obtained recognition by his neighbours as a skilled art-workman, and a creditable tradesman and townsman.

Richard Dugdale, albeit he had started in life as a rural parish 'prentice, was ambitious and aspiring. He was not satisfied with his warrior's laurels, or with the praise bestowed upon his best work as an engraver. He advanced a bold claim to be a poet. He designated himself the "Bard of Ribblesdale." His liking for poetry, and his essays in that branch of literary composition, are traced back to his sojourn in Scotland, where he made the acquaintance of a member or members of the family of Robert Burns. It could not have been with Burns himself, who died in 1796, when Mr. Dugdale was a child, but he may have met a brother or son of the poet. At any rate he was an enthusiastic admirer of Burns's genius, and was familiar with his verse, snatches of which he would frequently recite. Burns, in fact, Richard Dugdale had taken for his model, and he followed him, though afar off. The short satiric flashes of Burns "Dicky" particularly affected and attempted to imitate. Poets, like prophets, unless they be of the highest rank, are much slighted and "without honour" in their own country and amongst their near neighbours. Blackburn is a prosaic sort of place, either as a seat of mechanical industry, or as a social community. Yet Blackburn, a generation since, was haunted by quite a small flock of minor poets, or persons who imagined themselves to be poetically inspired. There

were Hodgson, Dugdale, Billington, John Baron, and a half-score of younger ones whom it is kindness not to name, for their pretension to the name of poet has been long since withdrawn and their "crude imaginings" in rhyme happily forgotten. With the exception of Hodgson, who was of an earlier date, Richard Dugdale was by many years the senior of the rest of the local poetasters of the period I have in mind, and he looked down upon them as a covey of callow, fluttering fledglings, and felt provoked by their effrontery; whilst they, on their part, regarded "Dicky" Dugdale, in his adopted character of "Bard of Ribblesdale," as a hoary myth. A desultory warfare, with arrows of rhymed skit and lampoon, was maintained betwixt the elder "bard" and one or two of the juniors. "Dicky," having spent a whole evening in composing an "epitaph" on Will. Durham or a satire on Jack Baron, would waylay his acquaintances as they walked down to business past his shop next morning, and, "fixing them with his glittering eye," compelled them to stand and listen whilst he repeated his caustic lines. Then came the turn of the rival rhymester, and a night or two after Jack Baron might have been seen and heard in some beerhouse kitchen in Grimshaw Park, declaiming a stinging philippic on old "Dicky" Dugdale that he had flung off in a heat of resentment on hearing of "Dicky's" latest stave about him. Such personalities in rhyme did not leave the authors mortal enemies. They were not so sensitive as that. Within a short time they met at some place of resort, had it out, and were reconciled over stiff glasses of whisky-toddy.

Richard Dugdale's fame as a poet was meant to have rested upon a sustained effort of genius in the nature of an epic, or a narrative poem after the manner of Byron's "Don Juan" or "Childe Harold." Its subject or hero was

"Nicholas Gosford," and the work was a poetised version of "Dule upo' Dun" (the sign of an ancient hostelry near Clitheroe), related in prose by Roby in his "Traditions of Lancashire." But "Nicholas Gosford," the designed great work of our "Ribblesdale Bard," never proceeded in execution to the completion of so much as the first canto. Only two or three sample verses got into print, and on inquiry I learn that the MS. was lost, along with those of Mr. Dugdale's shorter poems, by being lent, before the author's death, to some person who did not see it to be his bounden duty to return them. Mr. Dugdale, indeed, printed very little of his verse, and no matter how gifted a writer of poetry may be, he cannot expect fame for verse withheld from the world.

One of the best of Richard Dugdale's pieces that was published was inscribed to the memory of his favourite, Burns, dated January 20th, 1860. One cannot deny the possession of some poetic feeling, if no great conception, to the author of the subjoined selected stanzas from this poem :—

"One hundred years and more have passed away
  Since Nature gave her northern Shakespeare birth —
The noblest peasant-bard, the world doth say,
  That e'er arose among the sons of earth.
The tenderest singer of the heart's desires
That ever dreamed of love, and felt its purer fires.

"Ye minstrels, come from every land of song,
  And to his memory grateful offerings bring,
That unborn generations may prolong
  His name, and do him homage as a king.
King of poetic intellects, that sway
The minds of multitudes, e'en in our later day.

. . . . . .

"No laureate he to court the royal smile,
  Or unto wealth to bend with bashful brow ;
Stern independence gave him strength to toil,
  And sing his country's greatness at the plough.
To sing her world-known valour and renown,
And at Oppression's feet to throw the gauntlet down."

Mr. Dugdale's daughter, Mrs. Tempo, who seems to have her father's taste for poetry, supplies me from memory with the following lines written by him on receipt of a spray of hawthorn brought to him by a lady :—

"*Lines on a Spray of Hawthorn.*

Hail, infant of a happy year,
And yet the hand that brought thee here
I praise it not.
More lovely on thy parent tree
The wondering poet watches thee
In some lone spot ;
When soaring lark sings coming day,
And robin rests beneath some spray
From which thou'rt torn,
Like infant at a mother's breast,
Who fondly nursed and then caressed
Her dear first-born."

Richard Dugdale's diversions were not confined to the spinning of rhymes. He had a great fancy for old carved oak, in pieces of furniture or ornamental articles, and he was always spending his spare money in the purchase of these things, until his house was filled with them. Also he was a collector of walking-sticks, whereof he had accumulated about 300 before his death. They were of all shapes and kinds of wood, the more crooked or twisted the better; many of them he had himself cut out of the trees on which they grew, and all of them he had shaped and polished. Some he mounted with silver for presents to friends, with inscriptions engraved by himself.

A characteristic of Richard Dugdale was his readiness to go and bear witness to the previous good character of townsmen who had gone wrong, upon their trial at the assizes or quarter sessions. The action was, I dare say, prompted by genuine pity for the acquaintances who had compromised themselves, by one who had himself found the

value of the intercession of friends when, as I have narrated, he was to be court-martialled for desertion. Once, at York Assizes, an engraver who had worked with Mr. Dugdale was being tried on the charge of having engraved a counterfeit bank-note. Mr. Dugdale attended the court as a skilled witness, and his evidence to show that the plate was not the prisoner's work was so positive that it satisfied the jury, and the accused was acquitted on the strength of it.

Richard Dugdale lived to a round old age in spite of all he had gone through of hardship and buffeting as a parish apprentice and as a soldier, and subsequently whilst working his way into a position as a tradesman. In his snug little home, near the top of Duke's Brow, which he called "Rose-bud Cottage," he spent his last years in peace and rest, having relinquished the business to his son. I have been told that even in his 80th year he engraved some very neat work. The most curious of numerous examples of engraving on the smallest scale was the cutting of the Lord's Prayer upon a disc of silver no larger than a threepenny piece. He engraved four long lines of his own composition upon the inside of a memorial ring. In work so trying to the eyes as these microscopic inscriptions his patience was as wonderful as his steadiness of hand when using the graver.

Mr. Dugdale was twice married, and had two sons and a daughter by the first wife, and a son and daughter by the second. His youngest son, Mr. Richard Dugdale, is Borough Surveyor of Huddersfield. Mr. Richard Dugdale died on the 17th of March, 1874. Had he lived until June he would have completed 84 years of life.

IV.—"HARRY" BAKER, TAILOR, NEWSMAN, AND SOCIALIST.

AMONGST the "odd men out" who made Blackburn their place of abode in the years bygone, Henry Baker, better known as "Owd Harry Baker" by the greater number of his local acquaintances, was certainly one of the oddest. He was a man who made no attempt to conceal or disguise his peculiarities; rather did he parade them. He had an utter contempt for the social proprieties—for those of them at any rate which consist in putting on appearances. External respectability in others did not command his homage, and for himself was repudiated as unbefitting. By trade "Harry" Baker was a tailor, and it may at first blush seem inconsistent that a maker of clothes should fail to appreciate the worth of clothes as accessories to the human animal. But he was altogether indifferent to the virtue inherent in good clothes, and the vice which adheres to shabby, worn, and ill-fitting ones. I suppose his philosophy had conquered his sartorial interest in new and stylish attire. Whilst practising his craft, he may have taken the measure of many a fellow-man, and thereby discovered the emptiness which is often masked by a showy set of habiliments.

"Harry" Baker was not a native of this town, or of Lancashire. Blackburn has turned out a few queer

characters, but none at all resembling "Old Harry," either physically or mentally. There aren't the patterns for the castings of a machine like that in this shop. Some county towards the south or west of England had the honour of providing a birthplace for this particular eccentric. What brought "Harry" Baker thus far northward I am unable to say or to surmise. I find no record of the date of his advent. Tailors squat so much, in the cross-legged attitude, when they are in regular employ, pursuing their handicraft, that by way of reaction they take to tramping far and wide when they are out of engagement. In the absence of authentic information on this point, I risk the conjecture that it was in the character of a journeyman tailor on his travels that "Harry" Baker made his *début* in Blackburn; that he wrought at his trade here for a time, until he had formed acquaintances, and that afterwards he was led to decide to settle in the town, and eventually to exchange tailoring for the business of retailing newspapers and periodicals.

It is just remembered by two or three aged persons, who were then his neighbours, that in the beginning of "Harry" Baker's domicile in this town, perhaps about sixty years since, he lived in a little house attached to the old Theatre in Ainsworth Street, and that his first wife sold leeches there. By that wife he had a son who is said to have enlisted for a soldier when he grew up. Subsequently "Harry" Baker carried on his tailor's business in premises in Salford.[1]

No doubt but "Harry" Baker was a full-blown politician and freethinker when he quitted his native district and

(1.) Mr. John Almond furnishes the following items respecting Henry Baker's places of business and personal peculiarities:—"I

alighted in Lancashire. Tailors and cobblers, when he was a young man, were even more conspicuous amongst English artisans for their general adoption of extreme opinions than they are to-day. From the time when he became publicly known in this town, "Harry" Baker had been spoken of as far-gone in all his notions. A Chartist whilst the agitation of politicians who assumed that name was maintained for the five points of the People's Charter. A Socialist of the

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remember him when he was a master tailor in Salford, in a shop that has now been pulled down for many years. Let me see if I can call to mind how the buildings ran in those days. Callender Street was a thoroughfare, and beginning from it, going up Salford, the first shop was occupied by John Catlow, provision dealer; the next as a barber's shop by the father of Messrs. R. and J. Worden (who are now opposite); Tattersall had the one now tenanted by Messrs. Sagar; the Little 'White Bull' was kept by Jack Briggs, or, rather, it kept him; Barlow, the tailor, lived next door (it is now an eating-house); the present tinner's shop was a tinner's shop then, kept by one Robinson; Porter's cabinet-making shop was next; James Boyle, confectioner, came next; then 'Little Dicky, fro' Clitheroe'; and then, I fancy, came 'Harry' Baker. I was living in Mount Street, quite a young boy, but just old enough to recollect that we lads used to delight to plague 'Owd Prick-a-Lonce,' by shouting in at the shop door that his wife was coming, asking him how long it was since he 'weshed himself,' and so on. Anything that came ready to his hand was good enough for 'Harry' to chase us with, but his favourite weapon of warfare was his sleeve-board, and we understood that whenever he had been at his libatious bouts, and had to face his wife on returning to the shop, he hid himself (so thin was he) behind that implement until he had a chance of creeping upstairs unseen. After he removed to Astley Gate one incident happened which may be worth relating. Along with his literary stock-in-trade, 'Harry' laid in, towards October, a small stock of cheap fireworks. He had affixed to his shop wall a map of the United States (it was during the American Civil War) and was fond of expounding his opinions of the cause of the war, of how it was going on, and how it would end. He waxed very valiant at times, and often was indignant with the generals who did not do what he would have them—heroic actions always. It was in the midst of one of these theoretic expositions of battle strategy and prowess that, either through the practical joking of a friend, or the warmth of the confined area, or some other cause, a cracker caught fire and started an instant and brilliant display of fireworks at 'Harry's' expense, and to his extreme alarm, for in less time than ever he had compassed thrice the distance previously, he was far enough out of the way of the American or other army that seemed to have so suddenly descended upon England, and selected his shop for the scene of its first operations."

school of Robert Owen, who founded the factories and model village of New Lanark in order to test by experiment his scheme of industrial Socialism. A disciple of Thomas Paine, who grounded his atheism upon that author's *Age of Reason*, and his rage for the destruction and reconstruction of political systems upon his *Rights of Man* It must have been about the years between 1845 and 1848, when crazy Feargus O'Connor was publishing his *Northern Star*, and visiting these Lancashire towns to harangue crowds and to push his wild and to-failure-foredoomed Land Scheme, that "Harry" Baker began to figure somewhat prominently in local party-politics. It was in the shop which had previously been kept by John Mitchell, son of the elder John Mitchell, that "Harry" Baker began business as a newsman. That would be about the year 1850. The shop was at the north-west corner of Fleming Square. Thence he removed to a shop now pulled down, between the top of King Street and Fish Lane; and soon after he moved across to the shop in Astley Gate (more recently and now occupied by Mr. W. Walmsley Astley as a confectioner's shop), and there "Harry" Baker remained.

A reminiscence of newspaper-selling in Blackburn from 40 to 45 years since may not be out of place in this sketch of an old vendor of newspapers. The sale of papers then was almost inconceivably small compared with the numbers now circulated. The two newsmen who, their shops being central, sold most of the newspapers purchased in the town were, Mr. Edgar Riley, whose shop fronted the top of King Street, and "Harry" Baker, in premises close by. Indeed, I can only think of two or three other newspaper shops besides the stationers' and printers', who sold odd copies to customers, in Blackburn then.

The *Blackburn Standard* was for a time the only newspaper printed in the town. Its price was threepence, and its sale about 200 or 250 copies, chiefly to subscribers, and sent to them direct from the office through the post. That was a Wednesday paper. The daily morning papers were but two or three London papers, also posted, and scarcely a copy was sold by local news-agents. From 1847, when the *Blackburn Mercury* ceased to appear, to 1855, when the *Blackburn Times* was commenced, the Liberals of Blackburn were without an organ of any kind, printed in the town. They and the town-people generally were largely dependent upon the Preston journals for news. The *Preston Guardian* (the Free Traders' Paper), *Preston Chronicle* (the old Whig paper), and *Preston Pilot* (the Tory paper), were published weekly on the Saturday, and were sold in quantities that may be called large, considering that they cost 4½d. per copy (later reduced to 3½d.). On the Saturday morning Mr. Riley was very busy, folding these weekly Preston news-sheets (they did not come ready folded in those days). "Harry" Baker disposed of a smaller number, but it was more in the popular twopenny weekly papers of the period, *Lloyd's Newspaper*, *Weekly Despatch*, and *News of the World*, that he did his trade with his Radical customers. Periodical literature was more scanty even than newspaper literature amongst the mass of the people before the present century had passed its middle year. On "Harry" Baker's counter any atheistical publications, issued at the time, might have been found, for his patrons included a group of avowed atheists or men who had renounced belief in Christianity as a divinely-revealed religion.

"Harry" Baker's shop, at the date referred to, was a

place of call for sceptics and all other holders of opinions by some called "heterodox," by others "advanced," in politics, in religion, or in sociology. "Harry" himself was in his way a propagator of those extreme opinions. The local unbelievers were vastly more aggressive forty years ago than at present. They had a hired meeting-room, and met frequently to debate and to confirm each other in their unfaith. They brought to the town the ablest lecturers on that side to be procured, and themselves took the platform and challenged their neighbours who accepted the Christian creed to meet them in public discussion. Sometimes those challenges were taken up, and set debates were arranged. Prominent amongst the spokesmen of negation in these encounters were, William Billington, the poet, Thomas Stephenson, a mechanic, who betook himself to America, and was living there recently; and Harral Johnson—the latter only a temporary resident in Blackburn, who was afterwards prosecuted for fraudulent transactions, and was sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. The defenders of Christianity were, I am afraid, not so skilled in controversy as zealous, in some cases; but more competent champions were procured from elsewhere to maintain the warfare. As for the Secularists of the town, Harral Johnson was wordy and sophistical in his method of debating; Tom Stephenson loud and flaming; and Billington acute, but apt to be discursive. I do not remember to have heard "Harry" Baker join in one of these platform skirmishes on the religious question. He was not a taking public speaker, nor was his bodily presence prepossessing.

This is the description of person "Harry" Baker was:—He was of exceptional height, over six feet, I should think; but he was so extraordinarily thin that he appeared

even taller than he was. "Thin as a lath" would have been a proper simile in this instance. His frame was straight; his limbs, trunk, and neck long. He might have fasted for days at a stretch, so attenuated and fleshless was his body. His face was narrow and beardless; his eyes large and grey; his forehead scored with wrinkles in wavy lines. His hair unparted, covering his head with short, wiry curls. The skin of face, neck, and hands was a dirty drab. In fact, he had much more the look of a mulatto, such as may be seen in one of the Southern States of America, than of an Englishman. In one respect he suggested the gipsy, who is said to wash his face and body so seldom, if ever, that the dust and grime which attach thereto become engrained in the cuticle, and enchance the original swarthiness of the complexion. "Harry" Baker, meet him when or where you might, invariably gave you the impression that his face could not possibly have been subjected to the scouring action of soap, or the swilling operation with water, for a period of three months or longer. He was a literal "son of the soil"; his native earth adhered to him. There was "grit" in him, and upon him. Those who knew him most intimately could not say they had ever seen him clean washed. His clothing was to match. The rusty kerchief which encircled his neck was unrelieved by any white linen or cotton collar visible above it. The coat, vest, and trousers daily worn suggested an indefinitely remote year for the date of the assumption of them by the wearer. Hat and boots harmonised with the rest of the garb in dinginess of tone. "Harry" was an exceptional case of the willing and utter renunciation of "the pomps and vanities of this wicked world." As you saw him seated in a corner of his little den of a shop, surrounded by dusty

heaps of unsold back numbers of periodicals, he reminded you most of one of those mediæval hermits who spent their lives in caves, under vows which forbade them to wash their bodies with water, or to wear other raiment than the roughly-shapen coat of turned sheepskin. As was to be expected, "Harry" Baker's repugnance to the use of the ordinary means of personal purification was the talk of his neighbours and passed into a by-word, so that on one occasion, another character whom I have sketched, "Jack" Salisbury, searching for a comparison to something in the last degree unlikely to happen, mentioned one or two other impossibilities, and then added:—"*or Owd Harry Baker combin' his yure.*"

A fellow "Free-thinker," who wrote under the *nom de plume* of "Anthony Collins," in an account of the bringing out of Mr. J. P. Murrough as independent Radical Candidate for Blackburn at the General Election of 1859, by Mr. Bradlaugh and the local Secularists, printed in the "Agnostic Review," refers to "Harry" Baker in the following lines, which go to confirm my statement of his contempt for cleanliness and tidiness of person.—"'Iconoclast' spoke well, and after the meeting received the congratulations of old Harry Baker, who, in honour of the occasion, had instituted a third festival during the year by washing and shaving himself—two ceremonies which he only performed on the natal days of Thomas Paine and Robert Owen. He was a veteran who had seen the 'Church and King' riots, and the burning in effigy of Tom Paine; was on the field of 'Peterloo'; was a supporter of Rev. Robert Taylor ('the Devil's Chaplain'), and a correspondent of Richard Carlile. A veteran like him could afford to be dirty."

That "Harry" Baker's personal slovenliness was due to miserliness was not supposed. I do not recollect that he was considered avaricious by those who knew him intimately. If he was niggardly, it was to very little purpose, for he never had anything worth calling property. Probably he had to rough it in the earlier years of his life, and had then fallen into the habit of neglect of himself which afterwards became inveterate, and, in conjunction with other peculiarities of body and of mind, constituted him in middle and old age the "grim, ungainly, gaunt," and grotesque figure which he presented. He was a modern Diogenes, with the difference that instead of the "tub" which the ancient cynical philosopher occupied in place of a house, he sat in his small littered-up shop, passing his sarcastic and scornful observations upon the follies of mankind.

It was not "Harry" Baker's humour to flatter the multitude, any more than to pay court to the great ones of society. In that respect he was unlike the demagogue who ingratiates himself with the mob by telling them how superior they are in quality to the other classes. Republican, Socialist though he was he did not disguise his opinion that the "poor in a lump," if not absolutely "bad," as Tennyson's "Northern Farmer" pronounced them to be, were ignorant and spiritless. On one occasion he was invited to speak at a crowded meeting held in the Town Hall to support an extension of the franchise. If I remember, it was not a party meeting but a town's meeting in which the leading men of both parties took part. Rearing his long, thin, loose-jointed figure to an upright position, and stepping to the front of the platform, he began by addressing the large number of working men before him as "Political Slaves." This variation from the usual

phrases, "ladies and gentlemen," or "fellow townsmen," evidently was received dubiously by the audience. The working men of Blackburn were not accustomed to regard themselves as "slaves"—a servile class—politically or socially, although the majority of them had not yet obtained the Parliamentary franchise. They felt themselves to be physically free and unfettered, and intellectually enslaved to no man. When, therefore, "Harry" Baker stood up and faced them, and accosted them as "political slaves," the epithet struck their ears offensively. The speaker proceeded for a few minutes, his remarks being in the same dryly sarcastic vein with the opening salutation. His point was to taunt the operatives who composed the main body of the meeting with their patient, acquiescent temper under their continued disabilities, and thus to goad them to a stern demand for their political rights. But a speech devoid of animation or hearty feeling, commenced with that disrespectful flout, elicited no enthusiasm and but slight applause from the audience. "Harry" Baker did not care. He had no popularity to lose, and would not try to gain any by a show of respect for, or civility to, the working men. Such was his attitude upon all occasions. Admiration he had none for anybody or anything. He was a destructive and a sceptic simply because nothing pleased him, and to him, in all departments of separate or associated human action, whatever was, was wrong.

Some time in the "fifties," "Harry" Baker got an idea into his head that something ought to be done to stir up the torpid public spirit and opinion of Blackburn, by means of the Printing Press, and he so far permitted himself to depart from his Ishmaelitish ways as to unite with several other superior thinkers in the production and publication

of a small broadsheet, to which was given the title of the *Blackburn Pioneer.* It appeared no oftener than once a month, and therefore could scarcely be called a newspaper, for the items of local intelligence, and the topics discussed in the "leading articles," were of necessity two or three weeks out of date for the most part. The description of literary periodical was not much more appropriate. The projectors were prudent enough not to sink much capital in the venture, in laying down printer's plant or fitting up a publishing office. The *Pioneer* was printed as a job by Mr. James Douglas, and the publishing was done at "Harry" Baker's shop. The circulation was limited; the readers were select. "Harry" himself assumed the editorial chair, but was assisted in his duties by other brilliant amateurs. The paper's existence was brief, and that the inhabitants of Blackburn were powerfully stirred and mentally illumined by its teachings, or missed it much when it expired, is more than I am prepared to assert. But if it interested its group of contributors, and furnished them with a vehicle for communication to their particular friends of their original thoughts and views of men and things, it was not all in vain. It seems to me that there are in the world a certain number of persons, men and some women, who are constitutionally possessed of a moving desire or impulse to offer at least one sample of their thoughts to their generation in print, whether in the shape of a short autobiography, a scientific essay, a small collection of verses, a controversial pamphlet, a sermon, or in two or three issues of an insignificant paper or magazine, and not until they have satisfied this craving can they die content. Only so can I account for the many trifling productions printed and disseminated, which perish as soon as they come forth, and

never find any appreciative readers except the writers themselves. "Harry" Baker's little product of this description was a few numbers of the *Blackburn Pioneer*. I cannot hear of any copies of it that have been kept.

Henry Baker died at his shop in Astley Gate, at the age of sixty, in June, 1866. Despite his cynicism, and his disagreeable exterior, there were some of his neighbours who recognized in him qualities worthy of respect. Over his grave, on the hill side, at Blackburn Cemetery, a headstone was erected at the cost of a few of his political associates on which were cut the words :—

"IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE LATE HENRY BAKER, WHO DIED JUNE 29TH, 1866, AGED 60 YEARS. ERECTED BY HIS FRIENDS, AS A TRIBUTE TO HIS CONSISTENT ADVOCACY OF PARLIAMENTARY REFORM AND NATIONAL PROGRESS FOR A PERIOD OF THIRTY-FIVE YEARS."

The gravestone is of a soft sandstone, and the surface has been so much affected by the weather that the inscription is partially effaced, and will soon become illegible.

Mr. W. Walmsley Astley, who for the last 23 or 24 years has occupied the shop previously tenanted by "Harry" Baker, informs me that his widow (who was his second or third wife) kept on the business for a time after his death, and then removed to Wigan. "Harry" lived and died a poor man. Mr. Astley remarked to me on his character and appearance :—"He was a decent fellow, but dirty." He took snuff in great quantity, and with that narcotic powder his clothes in front were generally besprinkled.

V.—PETER ELLINGTHORP, GENTLEMAN, AND GUARDIANS' CLERK.

THE subject of the present sketch was a totally different person from any of the former townsmen here pourtrayed, alike in personal appearance, deportment, manners and social connection. Yet he maintained an individuality no less marked than the other Characters in my series. Peter Ellingthorp was a man *sui generis*; nobody who had observed him once wou'd forget his form and bearing or mistake them for those of anyone else. I do not say that he was one of the strong-minded men, who impose their will upon their fellows who come within range of their influence; but that his habits and movements were unvarying as, in Blackburn at least, they were singular. If the pace of living and striving in a laborious community like this was quickened during his time, the general tendency to hurry did not cause Peter Ellingthorp to accelerate his footsteps in the least. Whatever other foibles he had, and some he would scarcely have taken the trouble to deny, he could at no time in his career have been accused of "making haste to be rich," or to be interfering with the business of his neighbours either. His imperturbable deliberateness, even when railed at by carping and anonymous assailants in the newspaper, was a study. Let me attempt to convey an idea of Mr. Peter Ellingthorp's characteristics to readers who are not old enough to have known him.

And first I must explain why I write the word "gentleman" after the name of Peter Ellingthorp in the heading to this article. In ancient rolls, and other documents, the word "gentleman," abbreviated to "gent," was affixed to names of persons to indicate a distinct rank or social degree. The "gent" ranked next in order to the "esquire" in old English titular gradation A "gentlemen" was either the son of an esquire, or else he was the actual possessor of a freehold estate of land of less extent, or held by inferior tenure to a manor. The owners of still smaller estates, simple farmers of their own land, were called yeomen. In our day we are used to seeing the description "gentleman" given, in legal notifications, to men who have retired from business and are living upon their means, though the minor landowner likewise continues to bear, if he pleases, the ancient and honourable name of gentleman. Mr. Peter Ellingthorp inherited from his father a freehold landed estate of 131 acres, at Shorrock Hey, on the northern declivity of Billinge Hill, near Blackburn, and therefore was entitled to be styled "gentleman," as his father and grandfather had been, although the latter was engaged in trade all his life. But I have written him "gentleman" on another ground. A few men we encounter in these provincial towns who seem to have been designed by Nature and sent into the world to be gentlemen, and for no other end or purpose. Their adaptation for that position has no necessary relation to the amount of their pecuniary means for supporting it. As true as that plenty of men who have amassed wealth can never be gentlemen is it that here and there a man whose income is limited instinctively takes to acting the gentleman, and to all seeming cannot bend his mind to any other vocation or object in life. Two traits of the "born gentleman" in this

significance are these: that in his outward manifestation, his demeanour, address and style, there is an indefinable yet visible gentility, and that he has no disposition under any circumstances to force himself to the performance of systematic, continuous and drudging work. These marks of the gentleman bred Mr Peter Ellingthorp exhibited from his early manhood to his dying day.

The Ellingthorps were an old West Yorkshire family, who derived their surname from the grange and hamlet of Elwinthorpe in Craven. The first of them who set foot in Blackburn was Richard Ellingthorp, who settled here sometime before the middle of the last century. He married a woman of this parish, Miss Dorothy Ward. These Wards were then and long before a pretty numerous clan in Blackburn, Mellor, Pleasington, and one or two other townships adjacent. I have learnt that the particular family of Wards connected with the Ellingthorps after the marriage of Richard Ellingthorp with Dorothy Ward occupied, 90 or 100 years ago, a house near the summit of Billinge Hill, before that hill was enclosed and planted. Members of the household engaged in the weaving of calico on the hand-loom, at a period when it was a most prosperous industry, and the weavers were able to earn so much money that it was considered the best occupation going. In particular, the wide pieces known as two-yards cloth were for a time so much in request, that the price for weaving rose to great height, and those who got them to weave were deemed the aristocracy of the craft. The Wards of Billinge added to their substance by making these two-yard cloths. Gradually the fancy prices they had fetched fell, and the pay for weaving them was reduced. When it got down to 10s. 6d. a piece for the weaver, the Wards

became dissatisfied, and declared they would never weave any more if the price went still lower. Perhaps they stuck to their resolution. Anyhow, the price of two-yard cloths declined year after year, until at last, during the depression in 1846 and 1847, the weavers received no more than 1s. 8d. a piece for them. That was the lowest point, and those were the last cloths of the kind woven on hand-looms about Blackburn. Old Henry Hayhurst, who later kept the Turner's Arms in this town, put out the last of these wide calicoes for the firm of Horrocks and Jackson, of Preston.

Richard Ellingthorp's eldest son by Dorothy Ward was named Peter; and he had another son Richard, who died young, and several daughters, one of whom, Elizabeth, married John Haworth, of Blackburn, yeoman, and was mother of Mr. Richard Haworth, cotton spinner, of Factory Hill; and another, Jane, married Henry Slater, of Blackburn. Either by purchase or through his wife, Richard Ellingthorp acquired the Shorrock Hey estate at the north end of Pleasington township, where it adjoins the Woodfold tenement in Mellor, and on it he built the old house which still remains, though in ruins. On its west wall, just beneath the coping, is the ornamented leaden head of a downspout, bearing an inscription that tells us who built the house and the year of its erection :—

1766

R * D

P * E

The initials stand for Richard, Dorothy, and Peter Ellingthorp (the builder, his wife, and son).

Richard Ellingthorp traded, as a "chapman" or merchant, in the Blackburn Grays and other cloths then manufactured here, and in that business his son Peter succeeded him. He died towards the end of 1782; and I have found the obituary of his widow:—1797. January. "Mrs. Ellingthorp of Blackburn, widow of Mr. Richard Ellingthorp, Cotton Manufacturer."

For a number of years down to 1797, or later, Peter Ellingthorp, son of Richard, and grandfather of our Peter, did not reside at Shorrock Hey. He or his mother let the house and farm to Mr. James Lund, another local trader in calicoes, father of Mr. Richard Lund, and grandfather of my friend Mr. John Lund, J.P. At Shorrock Hey Mr. James Lund died of a fever, at the age of 40, on Old Christmas Day, 1797; and there his only son Richard had been born the year before, on December 21st, 1796. Whilst James Lund tenanted Shorrock Hey, the heir to the place, Mr. Peter Ellingthorp, lived in King Street, Blackburn, in one of the houses on the north side of the street, opposite to Heaton Street. The elder Peter Ellingthorp was born in 1750. In 1788 he was a member of the Subscription Bowling Green (of which his grandson Peter was a member fifty years after in 1838). He married, before 1788, Miss Mary Rixon, daughter of Mr. Samuel Rixon, Innkeeper, of the Old Black Bull Inn A son, Richard, was born in 1779. At the age of 59, Peter Ellingthorp died, as the *Blackburn Mail* records:—"On Sunday, Jan. 15, 1809, much respected, Mr. Peter Ellingthorp, of King Street, in this town." His widow died in 1827. The year of his father's death, in March, Mr. Richard Ellingthorp married, at the Parish Church, Mary Edmundson. A tradition lingers in the memories of old persons who knew

them that Richard's wife had been his housekeeper, and there is a certain significance in the fact that the first child, who was Peter, the subject of this sketch, was born within six months of the parents' marriage. He was born on August 25th, 1809, and his only brother, Rixon, was born in July, 1818. Four sisters, Jane, Ann, Elizabeth, and Dorothy, all died young and unmarried. Mr. Richard Ellingthorp died in April, 1836, aged 56.

I have introduced the character-sketch of Mr. Peter Ellingthorp with the preceding facts respecting his progenitors, which I happen to have gathered, for the perusal of such as care for information of that kind. Now for Peter himself. As a boy, he received his education at the old Grammar School of Blackburn; and that his father was then in residence at Shorrock Hey is inferred from the circumstance that young Peter usually brought his dinner with him into the town, and left it as he passed on his way to school in the morning at the house of Thomas Stones, in Nab-lane, where he returned to eat it in the dinner-hour. His father determined to make him a lawyer, and after leaving school he was placed with one of the legal firms in the town. I do not know which, unless it was Messrs. Carr and Robinson (now Robinson and Son). The late Mr. Dixon Robinson was a friend of Mr. Peter Ellingthorp in after years. Between 1830 and 1836 Peter established himself as a solicitor in Back-lane. It is mentioned that the business he secured was not considerable. During those years, when a young man, Peter only comes into view as the honorary secretary to a political association called the "Blackburn Conservative Political Union." His father on his death would leave his two sons, Peter and Rixon, some provision, besides the Shorrock Hey estate, which fell to Peter's share

as the elder son. The Blackburn Poor Law Union was created in 1836, under the provisions of the new Poor Law, and the first meeting of the County Justices who were *ex-officio* Guardians and of the other Guardians elected by the several townships comprised in the Union was held on the 21st January, 1837. Joseph Feilden, Esq., presided. The Guardians for Blackburn, it may be interesting to mention, returned in that first election were, Messrs. Robert Hopwood, Banister Eccles, James Pilkington, William Alston, and Robert Ainsworth; for Witton, Mr. George Radcliffe; for Livesey, Mr. Moses Cocker; for Lower Darwen, Mr. Christopher Hindle; and for Over Darwen, Messrs. Seth Harwood and William Hutchinson. For the office of Clerk to the Guardians Mr. Peter Ellingthorp was a candidate, and he dated his application from "Back-lane," where he had his private office. The other candidates were, Mr. J. B. S. Sturdy, solicitor; Mr. Richard Wilding, solicitor; and Mr. T. E. Swift. The appointment was made at the first meeting of the Guardians Mr. Sturdy was ill at the time, and could not undertake to assume the duties until he recovered. The contest lay between Mr. Peter Ellingthorp and Mr. Richard Wilding. John Fowden Hindle, Esq., of Woodfold Park, had promised to propose Mr. Ellingthorp, but he was confined at home by the effects of an accident. Mr. Alston therefore proposed, and Mr. George Radcliffe (who was Mr. Joseph Feilden's steward, and father of the present Clerk to the Guardians), seconded, Mr. Ellingthorp. Mr. James Simpson proposed Mr. Wilding, which was seconded by Mr. Banister Eccles. On the names being put, Mr. Ellingthorp obtained twenty votes to Mr. Wilding's nine, and was appointed accordingly.

The contest for the clerkship appears to have assumed a

party character, as such matters generally have done, and the election of Mr. Peter Ellingthorp, whose supporters were mostly Conservatives, did not meet with the approval of the *Blackburn Gazette*, the local Liberal paper of that period. The *Gazette* upbraided the Guardians for having "committed themselves to the guidance of a public officer totally devoid of experience, and who probably never even read, much less studied, the law of settlement." The critic pointed out that Mr. Ellingthorp was the secretary of the Blackburn Conservative Political Union, and every member of that association who possessed influence used it to secure Mr. Ellingthorp's election. "Nay, more," he finishes, "we are told that many of the Guardians who elected him even breakfasted at Mr. Ellingthorp's expense prior to the meeting, thus laying themselves open to the charge of having sold their votes for a 'mess of porridge.'" These reflections are the usual ebullition of the party which fails to carry its nominee for a public appointment. Competent or incompetent, Mr. Peter Ellingthorp, having once gained a desirable post, managed to retain it, and for thirty-seven years he held the responsible office of Clerk to the Blackburn Poor Law Union. In the beginning, he had the backing of powerful patrons amongst the county magistrates who attended the Guardians' meetings—of John Lister, Esq., Joseph Feilden, Esq., lord of the manor, and John Fowden Hindle, Esq., then owner of the Woodfold Park and other extensive estates.

Although he was apparently so little inclined to exertion, the business of the Union must have got itself transacted, as it arose, by Peter himself or his clerks, or a block must have ensued. We have seen officials who can dispatch affairs depending on them without seeming to be busy, whilst

others, ever apparently on the run, are always in arrears. Lounging listless Peter Ellingthorp may have been one of those men who get matters done, as if magically, by nothing more than a word or the putting up of a forefinger.

Nevertheless, incredibly as Peter may have knocked off work in secret (in the recesses of the Union Offices) out of doors he did wear to observant eyes the aspect of a gentleman of the amplest leisure and of constitutional indolence. At whatever hour in the morning he may have started for town, from Shorrock Hey, or reached the offices in King-street, he was at liberty ere noon to stroll across with his slow, short step, to the parlour of the inn within which his select friends usually met to renew the inner man and to communicate bits of gossip. In his earlier period, I believe, "The Hotel" in King-street was preferred by the four or five mellow spirits who comprised Peter Ellingthorp's set of boon companions. Two of them were Mr. James Forrest and Mr. William Maymon (the latter, on account of his thinness, obtained the nickname of "Shivering Dan"). The elder Mr. William Henry Hornby would sometimes be one of the company. "The Hotel," forty-five or fifty years back, rivalled the Old Bull as the resort of the gentry. It was kept by Miss Hall, a lady highly esteemed by the most valued frequenters of her house. Subsequently, it was to the Old Bull whither Mr. Peter would wend his unhasting way to seek, at intervals of the day, the means of recruiting his strength, exhausted by the official routine. If report did not lie, it was sometimes not until "the evening shades had prevailed" for several hours that his day's engagements (at the Union Offices is not meant) were fulfilled, and he started on his homeward track the good two miles over Billinge End to Shorrock Hey. That he did not come to serious

harm on dark nights, traversing those narrow tree-shaded lanes of the second mile, was surprising. He must have often owed his escape either to the watchful Providence which protects all helpless creatures or to the mechanical knowledge of the paths trodden daily for a life-time which at length renders one almost independent of the aids of light and of the perceptive senses. In his prime, say about the age of 40 to 45, I have often seen Mr. Peter Ellingthorp take his stately short walk from the top of King-street down Church-street to the Old Bull, or standing about the door of Mr. Walkden's shop (the old *Standard* office), in King William-street, and have contemplated, with a degree of admiration, that tall, slender, shapely figure; that finely-featured aristocratic face and head, with its black hair and whiskers, carefully groomed and trimmed: and the attire so faultlessly fitting the well-built frame. The silk hat somewhat jauntily poised on the head; the elaborate coloured silk scarf round the neck, sustaining the upright starched linen collars, and with its gold pin stuck in front; the coat of glossy dark brown cloth, buttoned across the breast, but cut away below, displaying the white or flowered vest beneath; the light cloth trousers kept straight and tight by straps passing under the polished boots; the gloves; the "nobby" walking-stick; and the unfailing flower, crimson carnation or rose, or perhaps camelia, fixed in the button-hole of the coat; these personal traits and artificial enhancements, combined with an air of patrician pride, or sense of distinction from the common crowd, and with an expression of cool, devil-may-care superciliousness, led me to the conclusion, before I was informed of his official position, that the personage I beheld must be one of the magnates of the town, if not absolutely the richest and one of the most

potent of the citizens, or of the neighbouring territorial grandees. Indeed, Mr. Peter Ellingthorp, in his heyday, might compare for majestic port with the scions of any of our old county families, instead of being the Clerk to a Parochial Board. The principal cotton spinners of the period, the Hornbys, Forrests, Pilkingtons, Eccles's, Rodgetts, Turners, Hopwoods, Boltons, Sparrows, and Briggs's, were all plainer men in their style and habiliment than Mr. Peter Ellingthorp. But then Peter was a bachelor, with no family calls upon him, and evidently his view of the part he was ordained to act on the world's stage was that of the "walking gentleman."

United with the Clerkship to the Guardians when Mr. Peter Ellingthorp held it, as now, was the office of Superintendent Registrar of Marriages, Births, and Deaths, and it was a situation containing an element of the humorous or the practical-satirical to see Peter, confirmed and sophisticated bachelor that he was, seated in the room at the Union Offices, used for the purpose, assuming the function which once belonged to the parson exclusively, and officiating at the marriage ceremony of those who chose to be made one by the legal process without the religious rite. On such occasions our "gentleman" maintained a becoming gravity, and surveyed the young man and woman who had come to be joined together in wedlock with a solemn countenance, and just a hint of the sardonic, as if he regarded their act as a folly, although it was not for him to dissuade them, but simply to draw the fee and then tie the knot. By the officers under his authority Peter was liked. The chief who will not hurry himself is not so prone to drive subordinates as he who is a glutton for work; and Mr. Ellingthorp consistently acted upon the motto, "Live and let live." Under his rule

his officers and clerks had breathing time, and were not made miserable by worry or over-strain. So Peter held on to the end, careless of the jibes of envious outsiders who insinuated that he did not earn half his salary, and that his easy temper and fondness for the glass in good company had changed from virtues into vices.

At the old house, which his great-grandfather had built, at Shorrock Hey, Mr. Peter Ellingthorp dwelt from the death of his father in 1836, until his own decease. The only other inmate was his housekeeper. Having lived with him for many years, she treated her bachelor-master with unceremonious familiarity; and, as housekeepers will, who know they have men very much at their mercy in domestic concerns, would presume to rate the old gentleman upon any irregularities he might fall into. I have heard tales of the "goings" on of Peter Ellingthorp's housekeeper which it would hardly be proper to print; but it is said that in his latter days she looked after him rather too closely for his fancy. She would follow him to Blackpool, or other places, to which he went for a few days' diversion, and shadow him as he strolled on the promenade. This, of course, was offensive to Peter, and he was moved to momentary energy of language as he ordered the old girl to leave his loneliness unbroken and go home. If gentleman Peter was self-indulgent, he was shrewd enough to avoid his father's mistake—if it was one; he did not marry his housekeeper. He sought, and let us hope found, his satisfaction in other directions than the matrimonial venture.

Mr. Rixon Ellingthorp, Peter's brother, was, like him, gentlemanly and a very handsome man. He married Miss Elizabeth Parker, daughter of Mr. John Parker, a younger brother of Mr. Parker, of Alkincoates, but he had no

children, and died at the age of 46, in 1865. He was gay and improvident, and ran through his patrimony years before he died. By his death Peter Ellingthorp was left without any near relative.

Towards the close of his life, Mr. Ellingthorp's health failed, and, for more than six months before his death, he was quite incapable of attending to his official duties. He died on the 8th of April, 1874, in his 65th year. An obituary testified that "he discharged his duties with a temper and ability which won for him the esteem of all; he was affable and urbane," and "seldom mixed in the strife of politics," although he was "a loyal Conservative"; he was "well acquainted with every detail of poor-law administration, and enjoyed the confidence of the Guardians and the public." He was the last of the Ellingthorps, as has been indicated. The place of his burial was the family vault in Mellor Churchyard.

It was singular, but in accordance with his easy disposition and habit of letting things slide, that Mr. Peter Ellingthorp, though a lawyer, died intestate, leaving his property, including the Shorrock Hey estate, to be divided among such of his distant kin as were able to prove their claim. Some years consequently passed, and troublesome proceedings in Chancery had to be gone through, before the question of heirship could be settled. At length the properties were offered for public sale. The late Mr. Thwaites purchased Shorrock Hey estate, which lies alongside the Billinge Scar and Woodfold Park estates, to which it was annexed, and thus rounded off the boundary of Mr. Thwaites's lands on that side. It was found that the next of kin of Mr. Peter Ellingthorp were the descendants of Elizabeth Ellingthorp (daughter of the first Richard), who

had married Mr. John Haworth, of Blackburn, father of Mr. Richard Haworth.

Respecting Mr. Peter Ellingthorp's housekeeper, Mr. R. Ward writes:—"Mr. Ellingthorp's housekeeper was a widow; her christian name was Rebecca. 'Old 'Becca,' we used to call her. It is quite true about her 'shadowing' her master. I have seen them go to Blackburn together often on a Saturday morning, in a hansom cab, and return in the same manner. I could give you plenty of instances of Mr. Ellingthorp's home-life. My mother thinks the housekeeper's surname was Kennedy. The one previous to Rebecca was Mary Calvert. My grandfather, Richard Ward, was gardener to Mr. Ellingthorp, at Shorrock Hey, more than thirty years—was with him 'till his death, and stayed on as caretaker many years after that event." Mr. E. Hamer, whose firm was employed to value the goods at Shorrock Hey, after the death of Mr. Ellingthorp, mentions to me an incident which shows how sharply the housekeeper looked after her own claims. Mr. Thomas Ainsworth, the solicitor in the business, had forewarned Mr. Hamer to keep an eye on the housekeeper, who was suspected of an intention to conceal some portable articles of value, in order to appropriate them to herself. The appraiser took the hint and acted accordingly. When he went to Shorrock Hey, to make an inventory and to value, he took his clerk with him. They were received by the housekeeper, who conducted them through the house. Passing one of the bedrooms the housekeeper did not open the door, but said that the room was hers, and contained nothing but a few things of no account, which belonged to her. The appraiser pretended to accept the statement, and proceeded with the cunning old dame to inspect the con-

tents of the other rooms; but he gave the tip to his man to stay behind, and to occupy the unexplored room until he came round again. This he did, and, when Mr. Hamer returned, the man he left in charge of the housekeeper's room had exposed the whole collection of Mr. Ellingthorp's silver plate, laid upon the bed, covered with a quilt, to the confusion of the housekeeper.

The house at Shorrock Hey, a small old-fashioned gentleman's house, has remained unoccupied since the death of Mr. Peter Ellingthorp, and has become an unsightly ruin. Some imaginative neighbours declare that it is haunted, but whether it is by the ghost of Peter himself, or of his housekeeper, or whose, I cannot ascertain. The trees and shrubs, planted at the east side and ends of the house by Mr. Peter Ellingthorp and his progenitors, are in a state of utter neglect, and the garden-ground is overgrown with weeds and blackberry-brambles. It is a gloomy, desolate-looking place now.

VI.—"HARRY" STOWE, BUTCHER AND AMATEUR ACTOR.

IT will scarcely be requisite for me to say that in making a selection, from among deceased persons who spent their lives in this town, for inclusion in this series of Sketches, the particular reason for such inclusion is different in every instance. Men whose course through life deserves to be remembered and recorded after they have been dead some twenty, thirty, or forty years, must have had something about them to distinguish them in the crowd of human beings whom we have seen march across the world's stage and vanish, or they would—within that space of time—have been forgotten save by a few kinsfolk and intimate acquaintances. But, though each may be on some account remarkable, more or less, they will not be found to resemble each other. Two or three of my "Characters" were singular to the extent of a grotesque eccentricity; others were not to call eccentric, yet peculiar, in mental qualities, or external aspect, or in ways of acting; and, for the rest, one may have been noteworthy for a comical humour; another for extreme opinions, and an extraordinary tenacity and combativeness in maintaining them; another for an inveterate indolence and easy contempt for the opinions of neighbours; yet another for the pursuit in privacy of scientific hobbies and for the indifferent habits of the recluse; another for an

ungainly gait, an uncouth speech, and a strange combination of shrewdness and muddle-headedness in his doings; and so on.

The subject of the present sketch—"Harry" Stowe—was not at all odd in his ideas, pursuits, bodily form and feature, dress, habit, or anything else about him. People who knew him best would say that he was simply a good typical specimen of the frank, genial-natured, hearty, sturdy Englishmen of the class which in former times came between the gentry and the peasantry—that yeoman class from which so many of our enterprising men engaged in commerce and productive trade, as well as in agriculture, have sprung. There was not the smallest trace of that exceptional talent, which enables a few men to rise to local eminence and influence, about "Harry" Stowe. Why, then, do I introduce him into this portrait-gallery of remarkable townsmen? In the head-line he is described as "Butcher and Amateur Actor." As a butcher alone "Harry" would not have claimed attention. The butchers who have dwelt in this town have been numerous. Their calling is a very useful and a necessary one. The majority of us consume weekly a certain quantity of beef or mutton which we cannot easily prepare for ourselves by slaughtering and cutting up the beeves and sheep which supply them. Butchers have their place in the community, but still they do not furnish subjects for the biographer by their butchering business, any more than the poulterers and greengrocers. "Harry" Stowe was a butcher, but he was something more. In his young manhood, and occasionally in his prime and later years, he acted parts in dramatic performances as an amateur. And the conjunction of "butcher" with "amateur actor" is sufficiently rare to lead

me to consider "Harry" Stowe worthy of a short character-sketch.

Henry Stowe belonged to a family which, in four successive generations, has carried on the butcher's trade in Blackburn. The Stowes (like the Ellingthorps, whom we noticed in a previous article) belonged to Yorkshire, and it is something less than a hundred years since the first of them migrated hither, and settled in this town. The surname was spelt "Stow" (without the final "e") formerly; and it was the subject of this article who adopted the additional letter, and made the name "Stowe," or, rather, the change was made for him by the officers of the military detachment posted in the town, when the barracks off King-street was in use, and "Harry" Stowe supplied the small garrison with meat. Some officer, whose duty it was to communicate in writing with the butcher, persisted in addressing him as Mr. "Stowe," and "Harry," thinking the spelling looked fuller and more stylish, I suppose, accepted the final "e" and used it afterwards, as we have heard of sundry persons named Smith waxing rich and proud, and varying their common plebeian surname to "Smythe." David Stow, a native of Skipton or the neighbourhood, came to Blackburn about the year 1796, and sought to better his position by engaging in the trade of a "linen manufacturer," or a dealer in the linen cloths, blue and white checks, then largely woven in the Blackburn district. Probably David Stow had learnt butchering as a lad, at the place in Yorkshire where he was brought up; and, before he died, he took up the trade again in Blackburn. It may be that linen manufacturing had not answered for him. He lived and carried on business in Penny-street. David Stow had but one child, a son named John. John was born in 1790, or

thereabouts, and his children have heard him say he was six years old when his father, Adam Stow, took up his abode in Blackburn. David Stow was living in 1824, when he appears, in a local directory, as a butcher at 26, Penny-street.

John Stow kept a butcher's shop in Blackburn between forty and fifty years. It was the shop in Penny-street, at the corner of Old Chapel-street. Between 1810 and 1813, he married Miss Penelope Carus. She was a Blackburn woman, of a family of Carus' connected by marriage with the Stanleys and Hopwoods; John Stow's wife, and "Harry's" mother, Penelope Carus, is said to have been cousin to the mother of Mr. William Hopwood, who is one of our senior Borough Magistrates. Mrs. Penelope Stow had a numerous family. A daughter relates that within fifteen years she had thirteen children. Henry was the eldest and was born in the "Waterloo year"—1815. Other sons were, William and John; and, besides any other boys, there were a lot of girls. Two daughters, sisters of "Harry," married townsmen well known. Mary Jane is the wife of Mr. Anthony B. Taylor, butcher, and Lavinia is wife of Mr. George Moulden. John Stow was a sufferer from the ill-will engendered by political partizanship. He was in his private opinions a Conservative, but, having considerable custom at his shop from Scotchmen in John-street and James-street, who were Reformers, he yielded to their solicitations so far as to split his vote for Bowring, the Radical, at the election in 1832. By propitiating the Scotchmen he had the misfortune to offend other customers who were on the other side, and he temporarily lost trade in consequence. He was not alone in that experience, for it was the common complaint of shopkeepers, then and later, that let them vote how they would, the penalty of

having to sacrifice a portion of their business was inflicted upon them. John Stow was a respectable man, personally well favoured, and taller than his son "Harry." He lived to the age of 67 years, and died on the 15th of February, 1857.

William Stowe, one of "Harry's" brothers, was a sort of popular hero, 40 to 50 years ago, on account of the part he frequently bore in the ferocious partizan fights which used to occur during election contests. The name of "Bill Stowe" was on every rough fellow's tongue at such times. He, too, was by occupation a butcher, but I am not sure if he had a business of his own. He assisted his brother a while, if not regularly. He was a member of the old town band, and was drummer on the "big drum." Fond of company and of the glass, he was liable to be involved in altercations which he had done nothing to provoke. One who remembers him described him truly as a big, soft, good-tempered fellow (the Stowes were all naturally good-tempered), who would not fight unless he was forced. Whilst the election was on, and party spirit grew hot, and expended itself in collisions of the Tory and Radical mobs, in which picking-sticks were the weapons and stones the missiles, "Bill" Stowe would easily be induced to march in front of a gang of young men and lads engaged on the Tory side, and, on encountering a hostile gang of Radical fighters, "Bill" usually received more than his proper share of blows and wounds. Once, in particular, he got sadly punched and bruised, and was seen staggering down one of the main streets, after the battle, bare-headed, with the blood streaming down his face and neck from ugly gashes, and clothes rent and bespattered with mud. He was supported on either side by chums who had somehow come off more luckily in the fray than "Bill" Stowe, and the accompanying crowd sympatheti-

cally sought to cheer the bleeding champion with cries of "Goo' lad Bill!" Bill must have felt sorer than even the defeated candidates for many days after that election. John Stowe was a third brother. His trade was that of a plasterer. He was a contrast to "Bill" for steadiness and discretion. John died in September, 1882.

Having mentioned his immediate progenitors and relatives, it remains for us to consider "Harry" Stowe in his character of amateur actor. There is, perhaps, no one alive who can furnish information respecting "Harry" Stowe's first appearance upon the Stage, or tell how it was that he contracted a fancy for theatricals. But it seldom happens that an individual, who has passed the age of twenty-five without having been stage-struck, is affected by that mania later in life, when business and family cares have begun to absorb him. At intervals of a few years a number of youths who have been wrought up to the proper pitch of interest in histrionic art by witnessing plays at the Theatre are found associating for the purpose of practising dramatic elocution. No doubt it was so in Blackburn when "Harry" Stowe was a stripling of 18 or 20 years. He was a comely young man, with handsome features, fair complexion, and plump but shapely figure. The consciousness of personal beauty has attracted more young persons of both sexes towards the Stage than the knowledge of the possession of gifts of intellectual perception, musically modulated voice and clear articulation, mobility of facial expression, and dignity or grace of action, which are the necessary pre-requisities to success as an actor. "Harry" Stowe's schooling must have been scanty, and his years of apprenticeship, passed in the father's shop and shambles, cannot have afforded much chance for the acquisition of correct taste in dramatic

recital. The old Theatre in Ainsworth-street must have been the place where "Harry" Stowe learnt what he knew of professional acting; and, on the stage of that house, he, after a limited experimental exercise in private, had been admitted occasionally to perform as an amateur, along with other amateurs of the town, but also with the companies of regular actors engaged at that theatre. These early appearances of his were before my time, and may be dated approximately from 1835 to 1840. They are to be assumed from the fact that ten years onward "Harry" Stowe enjoyed a certain traditional repute as an amateur actor, who had formerly given proof that he could sustain a part of importance, in a fashion which at least Blackburn playgoers would tolerate. Indeed there was one part and personification which he had in a measure made his own. It was that of "Luke the Labourer." The townsfolk understood that he, by repeated trials in past years, had mastered the character of "Luke," and accordingly, whenever he was announced to appear, which was at intervals of several years, it was as "Luke," in "Luke the Labourer." Were he alive, he could explain to us why he originally preferred that part; and nobody else can, for when I saw him play it, it did not strike me as being exactly suited to his personality, nor is it a very pleasing character. The one character in the English historic drama that Mr. Stowe could have presented perfectly so far as appearance went, without any making up, except the regal robes, was his namesake, Harry the Eighth—"Bluff King Hal." Our "Harry" was the very counterpart of that monarch in stature, in breadth of chest and shoulders, in bulk of limbs, in head and features of face. King Harry in his best time, before he became bloated by excess, was esteemed to be

physically a fine model of an English prince; and of the same type of manly beauty was "Harry" Stowe until towards middle age.

The late Mr. Charles Tiplady writes in his Journal, on April 3, 1856:—"Evening at the Theatre; saw Mr. Henry Stowe, butcher, in 'Luke the Labourer.'" The *Blackburn Standard* of April 9, reports:—"On Thursday evening our townsman, Mr. Henry Stowe, once more appeared upon the Stage, and gave universal satisfaction by his impersonation of 'Luke the Labourer.'" Eleven years forward from the above date Mr. Stowe made what I think was his last appearance upon the stage. It was in May, 1867. He had then entered upon his 53rd year, and had grown too stout for acting. It was advertised that, at the Theatre Royal, a performance in aid of the funds of the Infirmary would be given on Thursday evening, May 2, 1867, on which occasion would be presented Hone's celebrated tragedy of "Douglas": "Glenalvon," Mr. Henry Stowe, assisted by the whole of the new Company; to be followed by "Luke the Labourer": "Luke," Mr. Henry Stowe, supported by the Company. The fact that "Harry" Stowe at his age, when he had not acted before the public for years, was prepared to sustain two principal parts like "Glenalvon" and "Luke" on the same night, being the only amateur amongst a company of professional actors, attests his moral courage, if nothing else. The performance being for the benefit of the Infirmary, the theatre was crowded, and the dress circle was filled with the leading citizens, their wives and daughters. The Mayor (Mr. John Dean) was there, and beside him was the founder of the Infirmary, Mr. William Pilkington. The *Blackburn Times*, in its report of the performances, states that "the cynosure of the audience was the well-known burly form of

our townsman, Mr. Henry Stowe, who made up a bold figure in 'Glenalvon.' Making allowances for the disadvantages of amateur acting, especially in the case of one who has not donned the 'sock and buskin' for a long period, it may be said that Mr. Henry Stowe acquitted himself gallantly and successfully. He was several times called before the curtain, and as he bowed his acknowledgments of the loud plaudits of the house, with his hand laid upon his breast, he seemed greatly to enjoy the situation." Of the second piece the *Times* remarked:—"Mr. Henry Stowe's 'Luke' was a sombre impersonation." I was in the theatre on that night, and have a vivid recollection of the massive and somewhat short, yet imposing and martial, figure of "Harry" Stowe in "Glenalvon"; of his declamation which was in the old-fashioned stilted style in tragedy, of which Mr. Phelps was the latest and most eminent exponent; and of his immense fleshy arms, white as a woman's, which his ancient Scotch costume left bare to the shoulder. Mr. Stowe had purchased his own dresses for the occasion at considerable expense. It was his appearance which drew the full house, and a handsome sum accrued to the Infirmary out of the proceeds.

Our "Harry" was, on the whole, a more efficient butcher than actor. His knowledge of cattle was so special that he was often engaged to judge the cattle and sheep at agricultural shows, not only in the North of England, but in Scotland. He made large purchases of animals for slaughter, on his own account and for other butchers in the town. At Christmas he would show the finest stock to be procured, and was extravagant in his outlay on prize beasts, which could not be profitably sold. His shop for a length of time was one on the east side of Northgate, near the opening of

New Market-street. These premises were afterwards pul'ed down, and Mr. Stowe next carried on business in the shop in Victoria Buildings, New Market Place, and was assisted by his son, John Charles Stowe, and one or more of his handsome daughters. The son, Mr. J. C. Stowe, resides near Liverpool, and is agent for a Colonial meat-supply company. Like his father, he has thorough knowledge of the points that indicate quality in cattle.

"Harry" Stowe did not figure in town's affairs. Liking for the stage was his only foible, if such it must be regarded. Outside of that he was a steady-going tradesman, who minded his own business. Once a few of his cronies half induced him to become a candidate for a seat in the Town Council. That was at the Municipal Election of 1867. Some passing dissatisfaction had arisen amongst the Conservatives in St. John's Ward. Mr. Henry Ward and Mr. Robert Duckworth were the regular party candidates; and Mr. Henry Backhouse was in the field as an independent Conservative; whilst Mr. Thomas Pickup was brought out by the Liberals, who hoped to slip him in by taking advantage of the tiff of a section of the Conservatives. A political tipster, treating the contest as a sporting event, sent to the paper his notes on the betting before the race; making Pickup the favourite; Backhouse second in the odds; Ward third; Stowe next; and Duckworth last. Of the fourth competitor, "Harry" Stowe, he remarked, "He is a fine roan colt, but has been trained too little; his own weight and the weight he carries will be a settler for him." J. Bradley was named as his trainer. "Harry," however, declined to be drawn into the contest, and he was "scratched" for that race. Mr. Henry Ward and Mr. Robert Duckworth headed the poll.

Though a strong, fresh-complexioned, healthy man, "Harry" Stowe did not attain old age. He died from a severe attack of bronchitis, on the 5th of December, 1871, in his 57th year, and was buried in the Cemetery. He was a Freemason, and a party of Freemasons attended his funeral. His wife (she was Ellen Bulcock, a Skipton woman, and a very nice person), had died before him.

VII.—JAMES BROGDEN, INCOME TAX COMMISSIONERS' CLERK.

BEYOND my own personal recollection of him, the materials for a sketch of the former townsman whose name is placed above are fewer than are available in the case of other subjects included in this series. There is not even the briefest paragraph respecting him to be found in either of the two local newspapers which contain the announcement of his death. That omission is perhaps accounted for by the fact that Mr. James Brogden had not resided in Blackburn for the last three years of his life, but in Lytham, where also he died. Yet he was a native of Blackburn, and throughout a long life had been as closely connected with its affairs in certain departments as any man. James Brogden's activities, indeed, were not performed, as some men's are, under the public eye. It was seldom that he was encountered in any local transaction other than those that belonged to the offices which he held or discharged as deputy for his principal. None the less, it will be admitted by readers of mine who were acquainted with him, that James Brogden was what we call a "character"—that is to say, one who is not cast in the common mould, who has a form and method and manner of his own. His individuality was particularly distinct, if he did not obtrude

it upon his neighbours. My series of sketches of "Blackburn Characters" who have passed away would be incomplete without some account of James Brogden.

James Brogden was born in Blackburn on the 27th of July, 1803—the son of John Brogden. I have noted the marriage, on August 24th, 1801, at Blackburn Parish Church, of Mr. John Brogden to Miss Workman, both of Blackburn. They, if I mistake not, were the father and mother of James. A brother of this John was Mr. James Brogden, of Blackburn, grocer, who married at Blackburn Church, on the 8th of September, 1799, Mrs Hayhurst (widow of the late Mr. John Hayhurst, timber merchant), also of Blackburn. The father of John and James, and grandfather of the James Brogden under notice, was another James Brogden, who was living in Blackburn, and a tradesman in the town, 110 years ago. Mr. Daniel Woolfall, who is a nephew of Mr. Brogden, has lent me for use in this article a document, which is a brief for the prosecutor in a case tried at Lancaster Assizes, in the Spring of 1783, between the King on the prosecution of James Brogden, and one Joseph Kenyon, for burglary by the latter, on the premises of the former, in December, 1782. It may add to the historical interest of this article if I print, by way of introduction to the account of Mr. Brogden, the substance of the legal manuscript which relates to a robbery sustained by his grandfather.

The indictment states, "That Joseph Kenyon, late of the parish of Blackburn, Weaver, on the 10th day of December last, about the hour of 3 in the night, with force the dwelling-house of the prosecutor feloniously and burglariously broke and entered, and three pieces of gold coin, commonly called half-guineas, of the value of 31s. 6d., of

the monies of Brogden, and one pair of worsted stockings, of the value of 1s. 6d., of his goods, in the same dwelling-house, then and there feloniously and burglariously did steal, take, and carry away," &c. The case is thus set forth :—"The prosecutor, James Brogden, who is a shop-keeper in Blackburn, found upon getting up in the morning on Wednesday, the 11th day of December last [1782], that his shop, which communicates with his dwelling-house, had been broken open the preceding night by forcing open the street door, which he himself had bolted before he went to bed (which was not 'till after midnight), and upon examination discovered that the till or drawer in the counter, containing some silver and copper, was carried off, and that a cupboard, which was locked, had been forced open, and three half-guineas and some silver, which were in a drawer in the inside of the cupboard, were also gone. He likewise found a pair of dark mixed worsted stockings were missing. The shop door is divided in two, and a cross-bolt fastening them together had been forced off, and was found upon the floor. Having no suspicion of any particular person, the prosecutor was consequently incapable of forming any judgment who might be the thief; but going up street the same morning to bespeak a new drawer for his counter, and happening to meet one of his neighbours and mention his misfortune, he learnt that the prisoner, Joseph Kenyon, who was a person of notorious character, had just before been seen passing down the street with a bundle in a handkerchief, and in seeming great haste, and that the person who lived over the cellar inhabited by James Kenyon, a brother to Joseph, and where he often was, had that morning been complaining of being disturbed all night by noisy company in that cellar, who he had heard several times going in and

out after midnight. Upon these circumstances the prosecutor's suspicions fell upon the prisoner, and as he pursued him down the street he was informed he had been seen in, and not seeing him when he got into the middle of the town, he inquired whether the prisoner had been seen. He was then told that he had shortly before gone through the Churchyard towards a field called the Alleys, with a bundle in his hand. On this the prosecutor desired the person who gave him the information to pursue him that way, and he himself would go a different way in order to give him the meeting. He accordingly did so, and when he got into a place called the Spring Gardens, which adjoins to the field called the Alleys, he observed that the prisoner had been overtaken by the person who pursued him, and was in custody of him and one Bullen, whom he had met with and had pursued with him. The prisoner was very insolent and abusive on being so stopt, and denied knowing anything of the fact, but immediately on the prosecutor getting up to him, and without his asking him any previous questions, he addressed him in the manner that the prosecutor will give evidence, and afterwards was taken into custody of the constable. On the prisoner being taken into custody, he confessed that he was guilty of the crime, and that he had an accomplice, and then he accused four different persons, one after another, three of whom were taken into custody and afterwards discharged, he, upon further interrogation, declaring them innocent, and finally accusing his brother James, and upon that both brothers were committed. The prisoner is not 16 years old, and his character is shockingly infamous, almost from his cradle, and in July last he should have been tried at the Court of Quarter Sessions in Preston, for breaking a Watchmaker's shop in Blackburn, but the Court

considering his youth suffered him to enter on board a King's ship at Liverpool, where he was taken, and did accordingly enter, but afterwards contrived to escape, and returned to Blackburn, where he skulked, 'till he committed the act for which he now stands indicted."

The prosecutor, James Brogden, was called to prove the above matters, and further testified that when prisoner was caught by him he said :—"James, I want to speak with you; to which he replied he wanted to speak with him, and insisted he should go with him to the constable. The prisoner returned, "God bless you, speak with me here." On that Brogden retired with him a small distance, and without mentioning a syllable of his loss, the prisoner said :— "Will you be content with your money making up?" to which he replied he did not know what money he had gone. Afterwards the prisoner requested Mr. Brogden "to go with him to a public-house at a place called Bottom Yate, where he took him into a room, and voluntarily gave him up the three half-guineas, and 18s. in silver, as the only part he had about him, having spent and given away the rest. He then begged to be let off, and promised to leave the country, but the prosecutor said he could not, and sent for a constable, and had him taken into custody." "The prisoner said he had thrown the till drawer into the Bone-house in the Churchyard."

Mr. John Grimshaw proved the prisoner's confession before the Magistrate; Mr. David Crossley stated that prisoner and his brother James came to his house (a public-house in Blackburn) at three or four o'clock in the night of the 10th December, and called for liquor, which the prisoner paid for; they had a quart of ale, six pennyworth of brandy, and a bottle of gin. John Bullen, who helped to capture

the prisoner, described the capture and his conduct when taken. The Parish Clerk, Mr. Peter Nevill, said that he had searched the Bone-house for the till drawer, and had found the ledger book mentioned in the prisoner's confession, and a drawer which happened not to be the prosecutor's, but the property of a neighbour whose till had been carried off the same night. Mrs. Ann Brogden, wife of the prosecutor, Thomas Greenall, the Constable, and William Kenyon were other witnesses. A paper along with the brief shows in writing the expenses of James Brogden, the prosecutor, in the matter, including charges at Blackburn, and the journey of himself and wife to the Assizes at Lancaster and back. The total of his expenses was £7 13s. 9d., and he was paid £7 7s.

John and James Brogden, father and uncle of our James, were respectable tradesmen in the town in the early part of this century. James the son had a brother John, of whom I do not know anything. James's father was in a position to afford him a training for the profession of the law; and, at the age of 21, he was admitted an attorney-at-law. That was in the year 1824, and James Brogden went to London for the purpose. He practised as an attorney in Blackburn for a few years, and then went into the office of Mr. John Hargreaves, the Coroner, as principal clerk. Sometime about 1830-1833, Mr. Brogden married Miss Alice Woolfall. She was the eldest daughter of Mrs. Esther Woolfall, then of the Angel Inn, in King-street. The family of Woolfall has been connected with Blackburn rather more than seventy years. The first member who made this town his abode was Mr. Robert Woolfall, who lived in Liverpool, but having made a contract with the then lord of the manor, the late Joseph Feilden, Esq., to build the wall which

surrounds his Witton estate, enclosing Witton Park and the woodlands on the summit and southern declivity of Billinge Hill, he came to Blackburn, about 1820, to carry out the work. Finding this town a growing place, he decided to settle here. Unfortunately he was killed by falling from a building two years later, in June, 1823. He had previously commenced business as a timber merchant in premises opening into King-street. By Esther his wife Robert Woolfall had sons, Thomas, Robert, Henry, and James, and daughters, Alice, Mary, Catherine, and Jane. Thomas died young; Robert, when he grew up, was a master plumber; he died in 1854; Henry died in 1865; and James, the youngest son, who died in 1875, was a master plumber in the town. Of the daughters, Alice became the wife of Mr. James Brogden; Mary was married to Mr. Thomas Bury, afterwards Mayor of Blackburn, an Alderman and a Borough Magistrate (she survived her husband and now lives in Preston New Road); Catherine married Mr. William Littlewood, of Blackburn; and the fourth daughter, Miss Jane Woolfall, who did not marry, died about ten years ago. The widow of the first-named Mr. Robert Woolfall, after his death, took the Angel Inn, and kept that hostelry for a number of years. Mrs. Woolfall subsequently married Mr. Pemberton, and died in her 80th year, in December, 1863.

By his first wife, Alice Woolfall, Mr. James Brogden had a son and a daughter. The wife died early, aged 26 years, on May 5th, 1837. Mr. Brogden afterwards married, for his second wife, Miss Price, of Blackburn.

It was as factotum to Mr. John Hargreaves, during the lengthened term of between forty and fifty years, that James Brogden spent the most active portion of his life, and was brought into contact with many of the townsmen. Old Mr.

John Hargreaves had been appointed Coroner for the division of Blackburn Hundred in 1810, and he retained the post fifty-five years until 1865, when he retired in favour of his son, the late Mr. Henry Unsworth Hargreaves. Besides being Coroner, and having an extensive private practice, Mr. Hargreaves held other official appointments, clerkships, &c., and in the discharge of their duties Mr. Brogden had often to act as his deputy. The offices of "Coroner Hargreaves" (as he was best known) were in a good-sized old brick house in Shorrock Fold, and the large yard on the north-east side of the building was shaded with trees. Its site is now partially covered by the north end of the Thwaites Arcade, and partly by the back of the new Post Office. In the rooms of that old haunt of lawyers, secluded and silent, though in the heart of the town, James Brogden had sedulously employed himself from young manhood to age, and did not quit them until the building was demolished. Mr. Hargreaves, his venerable chief, was appointed first Town Clerk of the borough on the incorporation in 1851, and held the office two or three years. As there was then no Town Hall, his private offices were temporarily used as Town Clerk's Offices, and until he resigned Mr. Brogden on his behalf had a hand in municipal business too.

But James Brogden is remembered mainly as having had to do with the work of Income Tax assessment in the town, during some forty years, most of the time as clerk to the Hargreaves's, father and son, when they were Clerks to the Income Tax Commissioners; but finally he obtained that appointment for himself. The Income Tax was invented by Sir Robert Peel in 1842, and was proposed to be tried for three years, but it has now been continuously levied for

fifty years, and there is no prospect of its abolition. If the tax be obnoxious still, when the classes liable to it have grown accustomed to the impost, much more so was it at first, when the process of levying it was new. The Clerk to the Commissioners and his head clerk were held answerable for the oppressive incidence of that direct tax; and many townsmen regarded James Brogden as the real agent in saddling them with that extra burden of taxation. It was supposed that he was the man who undertook the task of looking up people who might be reported to the Commissioners as in receipt of incomes which rendered them liable to income tax. His knowledge of every townsman's private financial affairs was assumed to be accurate, however arrived at. It was with him that the appellants against the assessments for income tax came into contact; and if he had cared much for men's good opinion, which he didn't, he might have been hurt to know what maledictions were heaped upon his head. By subsequent reliefs to the class with the lesser incomes, the Income Tax has been made much less hard than it once was upon small tradesmen and professional men who find it difficult to pay their way. But during and after the war with Russia, in the years 1854 to 1857, the Income Tax was raised to 16d. in the pound on incomes over £150, and 10½d. on incomes from £100 to £150; and appeals were in most instances rejected by the Commissioners. At last, the payers of the tax all over the country rose in rebellion against the proposed continuance, after peace was made, of the additional war tax of 9d. in the £, and in Blackburn the remonstrances of the sufferers found vent at a meeting of income-tax payers held in the Court Room of the Town Hall on the 23rd of January, 1857. Mr. William Pilking-

ton, the Mayor, presided, and those who took part included the Borough Members, Mr. James Pilkington and Mr. Montague Feilden, Mr. Thomas Dugdale, Mr. Robert Hopwood, Mr. Edward Briggs, Mr. Hoole, Mr. John Baynes, Mr. Tiplady, Mr. George Dewhurst, and others The meeting called for the surrender by Government of the increase of the income tax from 7d. to 16d. in the pound made to meet the war expenditure. The effect of the agitation in this and other districts was that, in the next budget, the income tax was reduced to the old rates of 7d. and 5d. in the pound; and the local animosity towards the Commissioners of Income Tax, their Clerk, Mr. Hargreaves, and his acting assessor, Mr. Brogden, was sensibly abated.

In his personal appearance Mr. James Brogden had the look of one who had in his time performed a great deal of the routine drudgery of the lawyer's office, as well as its more exciting, lively, and public work. He might be described as the type of the old-fashioned senior confidential clerk of a long-established firm of attorneys—such an one as Scott or Dickens would have marked and utilized as a character representing the sharp and wary servitor of the law. He was about of the middle height, and spare in figure. The poet Thomas Hood depicted the aspect of Eugene Aram in the lines :—

> "Much study had made him very lean,
> And pale and leaden-eyed."

It was not much study of scholastic lore, but much poring over and searching through the verbiage of title-deeds and other parchments, which had operated with Mr. Brogden's natural habits to make him lean and pale, and to impair his eyesight (although he was not "leaden-eyed," for the glance

of his grey eyes was penetrating). His shoulders had become bent by constant application to the peculiar labours of his vocation. His face was long, thin, and shaven, and his short-cut hair was grey. The expression of his countenance indicated a watchful keenness, as of one who was not to be overseen or taken in. No great change was to be observed in James Brogden from about 45 years of age until he was well on between seventy and eighty. He must of course have aged, but so gradually that the alteration was scarcely perceptible. In his walk, his stoop, the lifting of his head, and in all his movements, James Brogden was only like himself. His dress was always a sober suit of black, not too recent in cut, and the "top"-hat which has so generally gone out of use for daily wear, even by the most decorous of our elderly men.

Persons who happened to quarrel with James Brogden spoke ill of him as one who would nurse a grudge for years, and would wait for his chance to serve out an enemy with unrelenting tenacity of purpose. Ordinarily, he gave the impression of severity of disposition. But he was not always austere. Under favourable influences he could relax into friendliness. Some twenty-five years since I had occasion now and then to enter into conversation with him, and found that he could be much more agreeable than a slight acquaintance had led me to expect. His memory was extraordinarily retentive, and his recollections of occurrences in the district, going back as they did to within the first ten years of this century, were very entertaining. He knew the public history of the town, and the secret history of many persons and families in it. One summer's day Mr. Brogden invited me to accompany him up to Pickup Bank to visit a tenant of Mr. Hargreaves there; and

in that drive, finding me an attentive listener, he became quite communicative, and related to me a great number of singular circumstances and stories concerning persons who had lived in and around the town when he was young—of the Sudells, the Claytons of Little Harwood, and several other leading families—of elopements, runaway marriages, escapades, quarrels, scandals, accidents in the hunting-field, and all the forgotten gossip of a dead generation. To a genealogist in quest of facts respecting the native clans Mr. Brogden's talk when in the talking humour was not only enlivening but valuable; and I made notes of a number of the things I heard from him which were nowhere recorded in print. I wish now that I had drawn more largely upon his store of reminiscences.

Mr. D. Woolfall tells me one story which his uncle, Mr. Brogden, narrated to him. The new Parish Church caught fire on the 6th of January, 1831, through the over-heating of a big stove by which the church was then warmed. Intense cold with hard frost prevailed at the time. The timbers of the roof were consumed, and the tower was gutted. Quantities of water were poured through the window openings into the tower and west end of the church. As soon as the fire was got under, some persons entered the building. Mr. Brogden, Mr. Roger Forrest, and a third friend whose name was not mentioned, ventured inside the church, when they discovered lying in the porch the body of a man encased in a shell of ice. They got the body out and took it into some room near by, to thaw its icy coating. With proper treatment the man revived, but he must have died had he been left a little longer. It proved to be a man who did odd jobs about the church. He was supposed to have had some drink and to have lain

down within the church and fallen asleep before the fire commenced; the water which fell upon him was quickly frozen, and he lost the power of moving, if not consciousness.

The one pastime which Mr. James Brogden permitted himself was that of bowling, and in it he was fairly proficient. His spent his leisure in the summer evenings at the public bowling-green which he frequented, and it is remembered that he would tarry on the green whilst there was light enough left to play by, or so long as any other bowler remained to continue the game with, rather than retire a loser.

After the death of Mr. H. U. Hargreaves, Mr. Brogden was admitted to succeed him as Clerk to the Income Tax Commissioners. He retired in 1882, at the age of 79, having acquired a competency, and then removed to Lytham (his house in Blackburn for many years was at Lower Bank). He spent his last years at Lytham, and died there, in his 83rd year, on New Year's Day, 1886.

VIII.—DR. SKAIFE, SURGEON, "BOOKWORM," AND ORNITHOLOGIST.

IN the Blackburn of 1840-70, one of the most noticeable of quaint figures was John Skaife, Surgeon. A man whose outward expression was the accurate index of his inward being—whose person and whose clothes indicated unmistakably the confirmed and crotchetty old bachelor, so absorbed in his hobbies as to be totally unmindful of those accessories which serve to lend a limited grace even unto male humanity. Although he seldom sought society for social purposes, yet Dr Skaife was in a manner known to the whole town :—to the operatives employed in every cotton factory in the place as the "Factory Doctor," who after inspection of their mouths and of the stage of dentition had certified them and their children after them as fit to commence labour ; to numerous households as the family medical man ; to many as the surgeon to whom they resorted for the stitching-up or dressing of their wounds and the setting of their dislocated joints or broken bones ; to sundry students of the natural sciences as a keen-scented naturalist ; and to booksellers new and second-hand as an extensive purchaser of books. An older generation of the humbler class of the townsfolk remembered him as the

public dispenser whom the charitable gentry of the town engaged to attend to their ailments, and to dispense the prescribed remedies. In this way the range of at least the casual acquaintance of Dr. Skaife amongst the people of Blackburn had long been wide.

The surname of "Skaife" is very uncommon, and suggests, which was the fact, that he was not a native of this district. John Skaife was born in Liverpool, on the 24th of June, 1799, and all I have learnt of his young days is that he was educated and apprenticed to a surgeon in Liverpool; then removed to London, and spent four years in the Metropolis, to complete his training for the surgical profession. From London he returned to Lancashire, and temporarily took up his residence at Lancaster, probably with the view of commencing practice there. That was in the year 1823.

About that time a few of the principal townsmen of Blackburn associated themselves for the purpose of carrying out a benevolent project for the benefit of their poor neighbours when they fell ill or were accidentally injured. The scheme was to establish a Dispensary, and it assumed shape at a meeting of gentlemen, under the presidency of John Hornby, Esq., held on the 19th of December, 1823. In January, 1824, the Committee of the subscribers advertised for a Dispenser:—"*Blackburn General Dispensary.*—Wanted, a Surgeon-Apothecary to this Institution. The Salary will be £120 a year, besides a house attached to the Dispensary, and Coals. No person will be eligible who has not passed Apothecaries' Hall." For this appointment several candidates appeared. One of them was Mr. John Skaife, whose application I print as the self-introduction to Blackburn of one who afterwards lived in the town until his death. He was then a young man of twenty-four.

"*To the Governors of the Blackburn General Dispensary.* —Gentlemen,—I beg leave to offer myself as a Candidate for the office of Surgeon-Apothecary to your charitable Institution. Having served an Apprenticeship of five years with an eminent Surgeon in Liverpool, and having since been engaged for four years as assistant to gentlemen in extensive practise in London, and being admitted a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, and a licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries, I flatter myself that I should be competent to discharge the duties of the situation to your satisfaction. My testimonials, both as to professional ability and moral character, will be produced to you on the day of election; and, in the meantime, permit me to add, that should I be successful in obtaining the appointment, no effort shall be spared on my part to render myself worthy of your patronage and support. I have the honour to be, gentlemen, your most obedient humble servant, JOHN SKAIFE.—Lancaster, Monday, Jan. 5th, 1824."

Mr. Skaife's certificates included one from the eminent Sir Astley Cooper, of attendance on his surgical lectures, and show that he had attended the surgical practice of Guy's and St. Thomas's Hospitals in London. The election took place at a meeting of subscribers, held in the Sessions Room, on the 22nd of January, 1824. "Mr. Skaife, of Lancaster," was appointed Surgeon-Apothecary. The Surgeons to the Dispensary were Messrs. James Bailey and Cort. The first, Dr. Bailey, was the father of a physician of repute in Liverpool, Dr. F. J. Bailey; and the second, Dr. Cort, was the father of two well-known medical men in Blackburn. The Dispensary was maintained until the year 1838, when it was closed; but it possessed an endowment fund of £1,500, which was invested, and allowed to

accumulate until the Infirmary, of which the Dispensary may be regarded as the precursor, was founded, when the fund, increased to £3,000, was handed over by the trustees to become part of the Infirmary Endowment Fund.

Thus Dr. (then Mr.) Skaife came to Blackburn in the beginning of the year 1824, and he for some time resided in a house on the same premises as the Dispensary, at 87, King Street. He did not proceed after his settlement to enter the matrimonial state, and later on his sister, Miss Mary Jane Skaife, appears to have lived with him, I suppose in the capacity of his housekeeper. It was by this connection with the town that Miss Skaife became acquainted with Mr. James Pilkington, to whom she was married on the 31st of May, 1831. She bore him six children, four sons and two daughters, of whom only the youngest daughter survives. Mrs. Pilkington was seven years younger than her brother, Dr. Skaife She died on the 31st of December, 1865. As the wife of a gentleman who for 18 years sat in the House of Commons as Member for Blackburn, this lady came a good deal into public notice during the period of her husband's political career.

When, with the closing of the Dispensary, Dr. Skaife's engagement there as "Surgeon-Apothecary" terminated (it may have been previously), he entered into general practice as a Surgeon. The house which he occupied as his residence (the surgery was in the cellar) from a date certainly prior to 1830, was situated in Union Street, an old street between the upper end of Ainsworth Street and the bridge over the Blakewater. It is a poor-looking street now, but sixty or seventy years since a number of the houses in it were tenanted by townsmen of respectability and of substance. I note that, in 1824, Mr. John Banks, cotton spinner; Mr.

James Briggs, calico manufacturer; Mr. William Chippendall, bookkeeper; Mr. Henry Haworth, attorney; John Haworth, gentleman; Mr. Thomas Rowbottom (he kept the Gaping Goose, now St. John's Tavern); and Mr. Henry Stanley, spirit merchant; all resided in Union Street; and several Scotch tradesmen, drapers and tea dealers, also lived in the street, *e.g.*, John Watson, Richard Nichol, and Wm. Coates. Mr. Lawrence Hacking, and Mr. John Hacking, master masons, were domiciled there. Several years later, when Dr. Skaife set up his surgery in it, the street was still considered one of the better sort of residential streets. Since then the middle-class townsfolk have grown prouder, and what manufacturer, lawyer, doctor, or shopkeeper in a good way of business, or what wives of them, would now condescend to dwell in such a street? Nothing less than a villa, detached or semi-detached, fronting to Preston New Road or towards the Corporation Park, will comport with the consequence of the Blackburn traders and professional men of this generation--successful or otherwise. Dr. Skaife was content to abide in Union Street fifty years, and until within a year or two of his death, and I guess that no other house in the street was ever stuffed so full of articles of value as that of our old Collector was before he quitted it.

Dr. Skaife had not long left the Dispensary when the passing of a law fixing the age at which children destined for factory labour should be allowed to enter the mills, to learn the handicrafts of spinning, carding, or weaving, necessitated the appointment of a surgeon who should examine the young applicants for employment, and certify their age and fitness. Certificates of birth could not then be procured to prove age, in many cases, and the object of some parents was to have their children at work at the earliest date possible.

"Passing the Doctor" was the preliminary ordeal. Dr. Skaife had influential friends who obtained for him the appointment of examining surgeon under the Factory Act in Blackburn. He was the "Factory Doctor" during a long series of years, and in his time two generations of factory workers may be said to have passed before him, and submitted to his scrutiny. The growth of the teeth was the evidence as to age upon which the doctor relied, and there are numbers of the elder operatives in Blackburn who can remember the incident of their subjection by Dr. Skaife to that test which the proverb forbids one to apply to a "gift-horse," of "looking it in the mouth." He used to dismiss the youngsters with a characterising remark which the subject of it did not quickly forget.

In his early years, and until past middle life, Dr. Skaife was a keen naturalist; and, in particular, was ardent in quest of rare birds. His observations on the appearance of such in these northern parts of Lancashire were constant, and those which were printed at the time are useful now, when, with the increase of population, the number of wild animals, reptiles, and birds to be met with in this county has been reduced. Between the years 1835 and 1845 I find frequent communications by Dr. Skaife of Blackburn to the volumes of the *Magazine of Natural History*. Amongst them are notes on the capture of the female Smew, at Preston, in January, 1838; of the White Partridge, at Alston, in the summer of 1837; of the Pomarine Gull; the Redbreasted Messenger, shot near Southport, in February, 1838; the Canadian Goose, found near Preston; and the following account, which I reprint as an example of Dr. Skaife's work as a naturalist, of the local appearance of a flock of wild Swans, in February, 1838:—

"*The Wild Swan (cygnus ferus).*—The present dreadfully severe weather has driven to the estuary of, and even higher up, the river Ribble, a flock of wild swans, originally 27 in number. The capture of four of these has come within my own observation; the first was shot, upwards of twenty miles from the mouth of the Ribble, on Wednesday, February 7th, 1838. This bird I did not see myself, but from the description I obtained of it should judge it must be a young bird, similar to the one about to be described. The second was shot near Walton-le-dale, about two miles up the river, above Preston; this being shot by a farmer, the Goth actually had it plucked and roasted. The third was shot near Clitheroe, still higher up the river; this was an old bird, in the most perfect state of plumage; the cere was a beautiful bright yellow, and the bird altogether bore a striking resemblance to Gould's figure. The fourth bird came into my possession on Saturday, February 17th, 1838, in quite a recent state, having been killed, I believe, near the embouchure of the Ribble two days before. It is evidently a young bird though full-grown; from the end of the bill to the tip of the tail it measured five feet, and the wings, when extended, measured eight feet from tip to tip. The breadth of the foot, when the web was stretched out, was seven and a half inches. The bird was exceedingly thin and meagre, and weighed only 12 lbs., whilst the weight of the adult was 20 lbs. The cere was of a pale flesh colour, with blotches and dashes of black, but exhibiting no trace of yellow; and the plumage, instead of being of the snowy white of the adult, was of a dirty greyish white throughout, conveying to the mind, at first sight, the impression that the bird was dirty, but on closer inspection this colour of the plumage was found to be permanent."

Many of the specimens of British birds which Dr. Skaife secured, and which had been seen and captured or killed in this neighbourhood, were cured and stuffed for him, and kept in cases in his house. At the same period of his life that he was active as a field-naturalist, he also became a collector of ancient coins. He contrived to get hold of a few good types of Saxon and Danish coins out of the great hoard of some 10,000 coins discovered on the Ribble Bank at Cuerdale in 1840, although as treasure-trove the whole of that remarkable "find" was claimed for the Crown; and he also acquired one or more silver ingots contained in the hoard. Roman and old English coins turned up in the district Dr. Skaife laid his hands on whenever he could, and added them to his collection of coins, which eventually grew into a large one of curiousness and value. He likewise began to collect medals, and at length accumulated an exceptionally fine collection, including several comprehensive series of English medals; English and Foreign war medals and decorations; English gold coins; English bronze medals; Foreign medals; Roman Imperial gold coins; Italian and French bronze medals; Papal medals, and Napoleon medals.

An antiquary and collector of archæological relics, and a bibliophile, as well as an ornithologist and a numismatist, Dr. Skaife formed both a select museum of antique objects, and a library of some ten thousand volumes. In the library were several of the costliest works on natural history, such as a nearly complete series of Gould's Birds, and works on county history, topography, and travel—of the latter he was very fond. The rooms in the house in Union Street were not very large; and the reader can conceive that, what with the cases of stuffed birds and animals; the

cabinets required to contain and display, in proper order, a varied collection of medals and coins; and the constantly augmenting library of many thousands of books, a large proportion folios and quartos, the house would be too small for the owner's treasures, apart from furniture and domestic utensils. Indeed it was, and years before the doctor left it for a larger, every room in it, and the walls of each room, were packed and covered with book-cases and books, with cases and their contents, cabinets and their trays of coins and medals. Parlour, dining-room, study, bedrooms, attics, were all utilized to the uttermost, and I believe the kitchen was invaded by the doctor's collections. In the front room, where Dr. Skaife usually sat, I have seen the floor, tables, and chairs all loaded with books, so that there was not space to step, nor a seat for a visitor to sit down. Obviously, a wife could not have existed under such conditions, and the doctor's "den" was a spectacle of the state of discomfort into which male humanity may sink in the absence of woman's restraint and orderly household management. As he advanced towards old age, the habit of acquisitiveness became ever stronger, but our doctor's propensity did not take the form of miserliness with money. Dr. Skaife parted with his money readily to pay for rare medals, coins, or books costing several pounds for a single piece or volume. It was only the objects which interested him he hoarded, and could not part with on any account.

Dr. Skaife was fond of travel, and until he was overtaken by age he indulged this liking. The continental tour was performed by few Blackburn people then, compared with the number who now accomplish it. Dr. Skaife's holiday journeys in France, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, were made on the antiquated *diligence* and river

DR. SKAIFE, AGED ABOUT 60.

steamboat, at a period when railways had not been constructed to any great extent in those countries. He claimed to have had some experience of Alpine climbing, albeit his physique was not fitted for that kind of pedestrian exertion. His passion was more in the direction of exploration of the Italian and Parisian curio shops, and the book-shops of Frankfort and other German towns, in search of objects for his collections, and books for his shelves, not to be picked up in England.

As for the personal appearance of Dr. Skaife, I have remarked at the commencement of this article that he was, in the later years of his life, whilst he continued to walk out, one of the quaintest and oddest figures to be met in the streets of Blackburn. He was somewhat under medium height, and inclined to corpulency. His face was rather round and fleshy, with prominent chin, thin lips and curved nose, rather mild eyes under well-marked brows, and dark brown hair. According to the habit of Englishmen of his generation, he shaved closely. His dress was a loose-fitting suit of black, rather rusty with wear, and an ancient black stock for the neck. His coat was the "swallow-tail," but amplified by the capacious pockets under the laps, which invariably bulged with the articles he had deposited in them. His manner of standing when he stopped to accost a friend is exactly represented in the accompanying portrait, after a photograph taken thirty years since by Mr. Frankland, when the doctor was over sixty years old. In winter he went out protected by a great coat with high collar, skirts reaching to his heels, and enormous side-pockets, provided as receptacles for the books he might chance to pick up on the road, or the current numbers of magazines which he carried with him in his daily trudge on foot from factory to factory, or

visiting his private patients, so that he could dip into them anywhere whilst waiting a minute. Unlike the younger race of doctors, whose earliest aim is to set up a horse and gig, to drive about on their professional visits, Dr. Skaife, in the more than fifty years that he practised in Blackburn, never kept a horse of his own. He preferred to walk, and his duties at the factories ensured him plenty of that kind of exercise. Another characteristic was his belief in the benefit of a plentiful use of fruit as an article of food—not cooked, but in its natural state. He ate quantities of oranges, apples, pears, plums, or any other fruit that was in season, and appeared to be nearly always eating fruit when out of doors. In the house, those who knew his habits whispered that he was, like Thomas de Quincey and other notable men, a systematic opium-eater; a circumstance which would explain a drowsy, dreamy look he had at times, even whilst pursuing his avocations. The resort to opiates did not shorten his days, but it may have had something to do with the condition of bodily helplessness into which he sank in his last years. At length he became unable to follow his profession, and resigned his public appointment. It was not long before the end that he was persuaded to move from the house in Union Street, to a more roomy one in Wellington Street, and there he died, in his 83rd year, on the 28th of October, 1881.

A well-known physician in the town (Dr. Garstang) communicates a characteristic incident in the professional life of Dr. Skaife. When a young practitioner in the town, the friends of a patient of Dr. Garstang's desired to call in a second medical man for consultation, and he agreeing, Dr. Skaife was selected. The old doctor met Dr. Garstang, and examined the patient. They then retired into another room

to consult. At once Dr. Skaife began to chat about some fine coloured drawings for the illustration of a work on natural history, issued by a firm of publishers in London. He kept the talk on that subject until the minutes allowed for consultation had elapsed. Dr. Garstang reminded Dr. Skaife that the time was up, whilst no exchange of observations about the patient had taken place. But Dr. Skaife had nothing to remark. So, without one word of conversation together on the matter which brought them there, the two medical men went forth to speak to the patient's friends. Dr. Skaife then assumed the professional form, and said that he entirely agreed with the advice and treatment of the case by Dr. Garstang, and rounded the thing off with a word on the probability of the patient's recovery or non-recovery.

Dr. Skaife took an interest in the Free Library and Museum, and was a member of the Committee from its formation in 1860 until his death; but he did not remember the Institution in his Will, as some who coveted for the town's Museum some of his rare medals, and coins, and antiques found in this part of Lancashire, had hoped that he might do. His collection of coins and medals was sold in London, in July, 1882, by Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson, and Hodge; the sale occupied six days, and realized £1,796. Dr. Skaife's library was sold by the same firm of Auctioneers, in February, 1883. The sale occupied five days, and the books were disposed of for good prices in more than 1,700 lots.

IX.—"TOM" CLOUGH, ATTORNEY AND MUSICIAN.

THE mention of the name of "Tom" Clough will not fail to conjure up before the "mind's eye" of every adult native of Blackburn the face and form of one of the most conspicuous characters in the town, who terminated a long public career by his death in 1882. Those who had not seen him engaged in advocacy at the Police Courts; or had occasion to employ him as solicitor; or been reduced to sue in *formâ pauperis* before him at the relieving office of the Guardians of the Poor, or to see him as, clothed with authority, he walked through the wards of the Workhouse, may have beheld him, under more exhilarating circumstances, wielding his baton in the front of the orchestra whilst conducting an oratorio or a concert in the old Assembly Room, the Theatre, the Parish Church, or Park Road School; and the rest must have noticed him often in the street, walking, tall, square-shouldered, full-chested, with an erect figure and firm step unto his last years. His face and head had a character in them which arrested the attention of those who saw him pass by. He had a distinctly assertive, masterful look. Light-complexioned, beardless, gray-eyed, with a prominent, slightly bulbous nose, and a determined mouth. You saw at a glance that he was not a

man to be trifled with; one who was accustomed to order other men, and not to take his orders from others. The particulars which follow will show that whilst his character displayed defects as well as redeeming good qualities, he was possessed of versatile talents, and was of especial mark as a musician.

The family surnamed Clough, from which the subject of this sketch was derived, had belonged for a lengthened period to the neighbourhood of Clitheroe, as I remember to have been once told by Mr. Clough himself. The tradition is confirmed by ancient records, which name members (Adam del' Clogh, John del' Clogh, &c.) as holding lands in Clitheroe and the townships on the easterly side of that town, Worston, Read, &c., from five to six hundred years ago. "John del' Clogh" means "John of the Clogh," and suggests that the surname was obtained from a location in one of the cloughs, narrow hollows worn by the water-courses, issuing out of Pend'e, on the westerly side of that mountain. I am not sure whether the father of Thomas Clough and John his brother came to Blackburn to settle before Thomas's birth, but he always considered himself attached by family connexion to the Ribble valley about Clitheroe and Whalley, and by his direction his bones were laid in the churchyard of Whalley Church after his death. Thomas Clough was born in the year 1810, and some time subsequently John Clough, his father, appears as an inn-keeper in Blackburn. The hostelry he kept was the "New Bull Inn," situate in Fleming Square. John Clough, senior, was living some twenty years afterwards.

Concerning "Tom" Clough's early years all that can be stated is that when his schooling was over he was placed in an attorney's office in the town, and eventually he proceeded

to pass the prescribed examinations and entered the legal profession. It must have been before 1840 that he began to practice as a solicitor in Blackburn.

But years before he established a position as an advocate and a solicitor, "Tom" Clough had become locally noted as a musician. He was only nineteen years old when, in 1829, a society of musical amateurs, called the Blackburn Choral Society, was founded, and he was one of the original members. His favourite instrument was the violin, and he was reckoned, when at his best, one of the most skilled violinists in the town. That he likewise played the organ with at least fair proficiency is betokened by the circumstance that for a while he held the appointment of organist at St. Peter's Church. The Blackburn Choral Society, in which Mr. Clough was actively interested, at one time held its ordinary meetings in the large room of the Star Inn, in Shorrock Fold; but the public performances, concerts, and oratorios, were held in the Old Assembly Room, in Market Street Lane. In the direction of the Society, Mr. Clough was associated, from within a few years of its institution, with the most famous bandmaster whom this town or district of the county has ever produced—the late George Ellis. The Society included both a Band and a Chorus, composed of male and female members of the Society. Mr. Clough was conductor, and trained the vocalists who formed the chorus. Mr. Clough's own recollections of the early operations of the old Choral Society are interesting, after an interval of sixty years. They are contained in a long address delivered by him at the unveiling of the monument to George Ellis, erected by his pupils and friends, in July, 1872. Mr. Clough, referring to the beginning of George Ellis's career as a musician, said :—

"George Ellis was born on the 11th of February, 1817. His father, old Robert Ellis, was a grocer in Blackburn, and played on the clarionette. He died about twenty years ago. My acquaintance with George Ellis commenced upwards of forty years ago [about 1830]. At that time I established the Blackburn Choral Society. We met at the old Assembly Rooms, Market Street Lane, which we had taken for the purposes of our meetings. We had the room fitted up with an excellent orchestra, tastefully decorated by our late townsman, Thomas Boardman. Here were given those grand oratorios of the great Handel—'Judas Maccabæus,' 'Israel in Egypt,' 'The Messiah,' 'Samson Agonistes,' 'Alexander's Feast,'—and other oratorios of the great masters of musical composition. At one of our meetings old Robert Ellis applied to me to admit his son George as a member of the Society, as fiddle-player. I cheerfully assented, because, although singers were not very scarce in those days, there was a lamentable dearth of instrumentalists. At that time I played second fiddle, and the Society concluded that George should play from my copy. A box was placed for him to stand upon, and from that time he stood and played beside me, until he grew and was able to read from the copy without the aid of the box. During these years he was learning to play the cornopean and other instruments. In time he became so proficient that when we practised choruses where there was a prominent part for a brass instrument, he laid his fiddle down and played the brass instrument. This continued until he accepted an engagement with Mr. Wombwell, became the leader of his celebrated band, and left the town."

In the years between 1835 and 1845, Mr. Clough conducted, and Mr. George Ellis led the band, in the Choral

Society's performance, before large audiences, of the oratorios, "Israel in Egypt," "Samson," and the great works named by Mr. Clough in the above quotation. In November, 1848, the Society rendered the oratorio of "Joshua" in the Theatre Royal; and at length—what was the culmination of "Tom" Clough's achievements as a conductor, and of the Choral Society's work—the oratorio of "Deborah" was finely performed in the Parish Church, before an audience of more than 2,000 people, in the latter end of the year 1850. Three thousand tickets were said to have been sold on that occasion, and the proceeds, given to charities, were large. The Choral Society was continued for some years longer, and it used to celebrate Handel's birthday every year by a dinner or supper, with musical selections following the toasts, over which Mr. Clough presided. At the Handel dinner in February, 1857, the Society presented to its founder and conductor a bound copy of Mendelssohn's oratorio of "Elijah," and to Mr. George Ellis two bound volumes of operas.

Later, Mr. Clough occasionally officiated as conductor of choral performances on New Year's festivals in Park Road School. The upper room of Park Road School, built by Messrs. Pilkington, and opened on New Year's Day, 1851, was, in fact, specially designed for use as a public concert-room, and furnished with a capacious permanent orchestra at the south end. It was first used for that purpose on the evening of April 17th, and the afternoon of Good Friday, April 18th, 1851, when the Choral Society gave a miscellaneous concert, followed on the next day by the oratorio of the "Messiah." Eminent vocalists and instrumentalists were engaged, and the band and chorus numbered 130 persons. Mr. Clough conducted both

performances, and Mr. George Ellis was the leader. The proceeds were given to the Mechanics' Institute.

Mr. Clough was accustomed to attend performances of oratorios and operas, and to follow them closely and critically with the score before him. He had numerous personal friends among eminent English singers of his day, whom he invited to spend their Sunday evenings at his house, whilst they were fulfilling engagements in the town.

Mr. Richard Whittle writes: —"I well remember playing the violincello at the performance of the 'Messiah' at Park Road School on Good Friday, April 18th, 1851, under the conductorship of 'Tom' Clough. His long hair thrown back over his head, and his general dignified bearing, impressed me very much. One amusing incident occurred during the performance. Near the end of the last chorus in the 'Messiah,' there is a full bar's rest or pause. A bass singer sitting behind me appeared not to relish the sudden pull up of the whole performance, so about the middle of the bar's rest he struck off with the word, A-men. The effect may be better imagined than described."

Mr. William Turnbull, a former bass singer in the chorus of the Choral Society, writes:—"It may not be known to many that the Chapel Street congregation was the first in the town to encourage classical music. Often the Choral Society came at Christmas tea parties, and with their own singers rendered the music of the greatest composers. One of these performances was going on, and the instrumentalists made a slight hitch in a soft passage. Mr. Clough, the conductor, forgetting for the instant where he was, audibly uttered an oath, which produced a sensation amongst the audience. When the second organ was opened in Chapel Street Chapel, I remember Mr. Clough's

presence there. He gave the matter into Dr. Smart's hands the night before, and at the opening he sat in one of the pews in the side gallery. A slight mistake was made again, and his distorted features I shall not forget, showing how keen and sensitive he was to the slightest discord. I sometimes think classical music was fostered and encouraged in Blackburn then more than now. One Good Friday (in 1851) the "Messiah" was performed in Park Road School (Mr. Clough conducting), and the line of carriages bringing people to hear the oratorio reached from the School to Darwen-street. Mr. Clough was very popular at the time."

In Blackburn, every man who does not find his own private business sufficient to employ his time and thought, and seeks to take part in the control and direction of town's business, has got to be a party man in politics, on one side or the other. "Tom" Clough was known in the second half of his career as a Tory to whom Radicals were extremely obnoxious. To some of us who have heard him imprecate the Radicals when they had the upper hand in the Borough and in the Town Council, until he could stand no longer, and dropped into a chair to take his breath, it seemed inconceivable that "Tom" himself could ever in his life have had any truck with such a party. Nevertheless, I have heard it asserted by those who had lived long enough to remember it, that "Tom" Clough when a young man had been a thorough-paced "Bowringite." Indeed, he once remarked to me confidentially that there was need for radical reforms when he was young, but since so much had been done in that line Radicalism had become superfluous. I rather think Mr. Clough voted for Mr. William Eccles in 1852, and he may have held a retainer for the second Radical candidate in that election. But soon after he declared for the

Conservatives, and he stood on that side for the rest of his life, nearly thirty years. In 1858 he entered the Town Council, as Councillor for St. John's Ward, and was in the Council six years, until 1864. It was on the Board of Guardians that he principally engaged himself in local administration. He was a Poor Law Guardian for St. John's Ward a good share of thirty years; was elected Vice-Chairman of the Board in 1853; filled that position twenty-five years until 1878, and during one year—1878-9—he was installed as Chairman. After that he retired from the Board and from public life, being broken down in health.

Mr. John Clough, "Tom's" younger brother, was appointed Assistant Overseer of Blackburn in May, 1854, and retained the appointment until his death. John was an altogether different man from Thomas. He was the quietest, most retiring and conciliatory of men, who never appeared before the public except in the discharge of his official duties.

"Tom" Clough liked to patronise literary notables equally with musicians, and he did this in different ways, both by subscribing for their books, and by inviting them to his residence to spend a day or two, or to accompany him on a summer's jaunt into the country about Whalley, Mytton, or Clitheroe, and to visit the ruins of abbeys, castles, and ancient mansions. He partook of the glass himself pretty freely, and expected those who were in his company to follow suit, if they would. Accordingly, his conviviality was liable at times to become too lively. His friend, Charles Tiplady, records in his journal an instance of this tendency, on a visit to Sawley Abbey in the summer of 1849:—"July 13th. Visited the ruins of Sawley in the company of James Houlker, Leonard Noblett, and Thomas Clough.

The ride was delightful. I had, however, some difficulty to restrain the company within decent bounds. The charge at Sawley was very moderate."

Here I may notice slightly one or two foibles of "Tom" Clough that in a character-sketch cannot be quite ignored. He seemed to possess a dual nature; the one, capable of being lifted to a height of pure sentiment by the power of music, especially of the sacred music of oratorios and masses, and of assuming a tone and air of dignity when the occasion demanded; the other nature easily suffered to descend to very undignified coarseness of ideas and language. A story attributed to one of our Lancashire humorists exemplifies the double presentment of our subject according to his passing whim. Ben. Brierley, the story goes, having come to Blackburn to give a series of readings in the dialect, had been secured by "Tom" Clough for his guest. After the entertainment, Ben. was introduced to his host, and was affected to solemnity by his demure expression of countenance. Up 'till then he had not heard who or what manner of person Mr. Clough was; but he took him, at first sight, for a clergyman or Nonconformist minister. His black frock coat was much of the clerical cut, and his white cravat, shaven cheeks and chin, expansive forehead, and thin long light hair combed behind his ears, no less than his unctuous expression of mouth and eyes, all supported the hypothesis that the humorist's entertainer was a parson of the "evangelical" or puritan school. "Tom" said nothing to undeceive "Ben."—I imagine he would deliberately lay himself out to mislead him as to his character until he got him to Holly Bush. Supper was served, and still the visitor was confirmed in the belief that the host was a sanctified party, and felt that he was upon his good behaviour. They

talked decorously about churches, choirs, and organs, and perhaps about missions to the South-Sea Islanders, until supper was over. Then, on the sudden, as the twain seated themselves beside the fire, a spasmodic pain in the digestive organs to which "Tom" was subject, caused him to utter an exclamation so excessively obscene as to make "Ben." stare in amazement, and altogether to dissipate his conception of his host as a pietist and a stickler for the proprieties.

"Tom" Clough's general practice as a solicitor was not so very extensive, but as an advocate he was during many years in great request, especially by clients who had roughish cases to prosecute or to defend in the local police courts. "Tom" entered into such advocacy with gusto, and made all out of his cases that a voluble advocate untroubled with moral scruples could make. The Borough Justices had enough of nauseating details to listen to then, as even now they sometimes have. In contested cases "Tom" Clough and "Harry" Backhouse, both then in their heyday, were often pitted against each other, and a pretty set-to it used to be. Neither advocate was mealy-mouthed, and both were obstinate and keen to carry their point. To hear them contend with each other and humbug the witnesses on the other side, the streets and slums were emptied of idlers and vagabonds and the police court was crowded. The proceedings in these latter days in that court are generally dull by comparison with what they were when "Tom" Clough and his contemporary advocates supplied the entertainment. Old Mr. Henry Hoyle, the Magistrates' Clerk, had his work cut out for him in keeping the legal aspects of the cases, intentionally confused by the advocates, clearly before the minds of the Bench. "Tom" Clough's busiest years in police court practice were from 1845 to 1870.

"Tom" Clough was a man of strong passions and affinities or antipathies. As a friend he was hearty, and as an enemy implacable. He was so unbending in will, that he was bound to quarrel with anybody who was equally determined, and who attempted to thwart him. In the Town Council he got across with the late Mr John Baynes, just before and during his mayoralty, and in the Board of Guardians, where for years he ruled the roost, he would suffer no rival to hoist his colours. With the redoubtable Mr. James Thompson, when he was at the height of his power as a local party leader, Mr. Clough measured his strength in one stubborn bout which I recollect. It was in the year 1867, I think. Mr. Clough had the country guardians under his thumb, with one or two exceptions, but Mr. James Thompson, by mustering the ex-officios, just managed to out-vote "Tom" in that instance.

Although he did not make a fortune as a lawyer, "Tom" Clough in the decline of life was comfortably off, and he was not stingy in the support he gave to objects that enlisted his approval. In particular, he encouraged by substantial help native talent where he found it. His purse was opened to help a local poet to pay his printer's bill. In that way William Billington, one of our ablest Blackburn poets, was enabled to bring out his first volume; and Will. Durham, "Tom's" "Man Friday," had money found him to print the first edition of his "Chronological Notes of Blackburn" in 1861, which he dedicated to "Thomas Clough, Esq., a gentleman long connected with the public business of the town of Blackburn, and deeply interested in its history." A native genius in invention, but too poor to be able to profit by his inventions—John Osbaldeston—was befriended by Mr. Clough. It is true he died in Blackburn Workhouse,

having lived to his 84th year, but Mr. Clough had the old man cared for and made as comfortable as possible in the "house," and when he died in February, 1862, his patron defrayed the expense of a respectable funeral in Tockholes Churchyard; and started a subscription to pay for the erection of a tombstone to indicate his grave.

These were generous actions to set to the credit side of "Tom" Clough's character. He has another claim to be favourably thought of as the prime mover in the foundation of the Free Library and Museum. At the town's meeting held in 1853 he moved the resolution to adopt the Free Libraries Act within the Borough, adopted with but two dissentients. The movement hung fire until Mr. Clough entered the Town Council in 1858, when he lost no time in reviving the project, which took practical shape in 1859-60, during the mayoralties of Mr. Baynes and Mr. Cunningham. Mr. Clough was himself fond of books, and his own library contained valuable works in county history as well as in music.

"Holly Bush," near Hole-i'th'-Wall at the top of Shire Brow, the residence of Mr Clough for many years, is a house of some age, of low elevation, with a good-sized garden at the back. Floriculture was one of the things in which "Tom" took pleasure. There he dwelt with no family except his housekeeper, Mrs. Margaret Haworth. Many people supposed him to be a bachelor, but I understand he had been married, for he had a son who bore his name, but who was not an inmate of his father's house.

For several years preceding his death Mr. Clough suffered from constant ill-health. His constitution had been strong, but it had not been taken care of in young manhood and middle age, and was now exhausted. He lived, however,

to the age of 72, and died on the 4th of August, 1882. He was a Freemason, and at his death was one of the oldest brethren in the town, and was P.M., P.P.G.R. of the Lodge of Fidelity. He was buried in the churchyard of Whalley, with masonic ceremony.

X.—THOMAS BUTTERFIELD, POSTMASTER OF BLACKBURN.

I HAVE to confess that I do not possess in the storehouse of my own recollection, or in the personal knowledge of the man and his history of anyone with whom I am acquainted, anything like the same abundance of materials for a sketch of Mr. Thomas Butterfield, formerly for many years Postmaster in this town, that I have been able to command for other local "Characters" deceased.

I consider him to have been a man with certain peculiarities of manner and disposition; but Thomas Butterfield was not a "character" in the same way that "Harry" Baker or Peter Ellingthorp, for example, were entitled to have that word applied to them. There was little or no oddity or eccentricity in the public manifestation of himself. Accordingly his figure does not stand out sharply in one's memory like some whom I have attempted to depict, but has become, after he has been dead these eight-and-twenty years, vague and impalpable. The old Postmaster was addicted to passing a portion of his leisure time (I mean time which he snatched from his duties, for what leisure could a Postmaster

have under the beggarly parsimony of the Post Office Department whilst he was in the service?) in one or two bar-parlours or "snuggeries" which he favoured, in the company of a few cronies, but who they were I have forgotten if I ever knew, and they have very likely all departed, like himself, to a country beyond the range even of the far-reaching international Postal-communications of to-day, and cannot therefore be written or wired to for their impressions of Thomas Butterfield as he was known to them. I may eke out my scanty facts about the old Postmaster with a few notes respecting the "economy" (a suitable word) of the Blackburn Post Office in the latter portion of the period during which Mr. Butterfield was in charge of it.

Thomas Butterfield was not a Blackburn man by birth; but his surname is a common one in Lancashire, and he may have been reared in another district of the county. As nearly as can be made out, he was Postmaster at Blackburn some twenty-two years, and as he retired about 1861, the date of his entrance upon the office would be between 1839 and 1840. Before his time, for some years prior to and after 1824, the Post Office was kept by a female. Mrs. Elizabeth Cross was Postmistress, and the Post Office was her shop, No. 14, Church Street, where she also carried on the business of a hatter. She was the widow of Mr. Robert Cross, who was in his lifetime a respectable tradesman in the town, and, doubtless, had been Postmaster. Seventy years since, when Mrs. Cross had charge of the Post Office, there were three mails into Blackburn; one from Clitheroe and Skipton, and also from Burnley, Colne, and Yorkshire, which arrived at six o'clock in the evening; and the mail in the same direction was despatched at five o'clock in the morning; the mail from Preston, Lancaster, Carlisle, and the north of

England arrived at seven o'clock in the evening; and to those places was despatched at a quarter to ten at night; and the mail from Manchester, which brought the letters from London and the South, and also from Liverpool, arrived in Blackburn at a quarter before ten at night. It was carried in the mail coach which proceeded from Blackburn to Preston, and took the Blackburn letters for the north on to that town; whilst the mail to Bolton, Manchester, and the South—despatched at seven o'clock in the evening—was carried by the mail coach from Preston which came in at that hour, and completed its journey at Manchester. In the town, letters and newspapers were not then delivered from house to house by postmen but had to be fetched from the Post Office by the persons to whom they were addressed, or their messengers, so that people who were not in the habit of receiving letters and sending to the Post Office might not hear for several days that a letter awaited them. The postage of a letter to London cost 11d.; to Carlisle, 9d.; to Kendal, 8d.; to Liverpool, Lancaster, or Skipton, 7d.; to Manchester or Wigan, 6d.; to Bolton, Burnley, Clitheroe, or Preston, 4d. These heavy charges had the effect of greatly restricting the indulgence by people of limited means of the practice of letter-writing, and by such the receipt of a letter was an event.

The system of the Post Office had been changed little, if at all, from the above arrangements, when Mr. Thomas Butterfield became Postmaster.[1] Thomas had'nt been long at the Post Office before the boon of the penny

(1.) Mr. James Walkden states that he followed Mr. Samuel Moore, who was Postmaster in 1836, and who died about 1839 or 1840. The Post Office at that time was at the corner of Lord Street and King William Street, opposite the St. Leger Inn. Mr. Charles Haworth remembers that Mr. James Cross, son of Mrs. Cross, was the Postmaster before Mr. Moore.

postage to all places in the United Kingdom, for letters under a prescribed weight, was secured to the nation by Mr. Rowland Hill, and the reform could not have failed to have increased largely the quantity of letters posted in a town the size of Blackburn. This was in the year 1840, and the adhesive stamp was about the same time designed and brought into use. Previously, letters which were prepaid by the sender had the word "prepaid," written or stamped on the outside, and in numerous cases the postage was left to be paid by the recipient.

I think it must have been near the time that the improvements of the Postal service which I have just mentioned were carried out, that the Post Office was moved to premises in King Street. If they were more convenient than the previous situation, shop or house, the latter must have been very poor accommodation indeed; for the King Street office was a miserable make-shift of a place for a Post Office. and the outcry of the townsfolk against it was loud long e'er it was abandoned. It was a private house on the south side of King Street, a few doors higher up than Mr. Thomas Ainsworth's house. It recently had a shop front put into it, and forms part of the business premises of Mr. Hewitt, cabinet-maker. The front door was reached by several steps, guarded by an iron rail; and in the lower part of the window was inserted a small wooden door. Through this postage-stamps were sold to applicants; and the slit for the postage of letters was beside it. To reach it you had to mount a a stone block or step, placed outside beneath the window. Another means of communication by the public with the officials within was by the doorway, through an aperture in the wall at the end of the lobby near the door. In windy, rainy, or snowy weather, especially during the cold, dark

months of winter, it was in the nature of an infliction to have to visit frequently a Post Office like that, where no shelter was provided whilst you were procuring stamps and affixing them to letters. The Improvement Commissioners were on one or two occasions moved to insist on something being done to make the Post Office more tolerable to the public, and I believe some slight protection from the elements was afterwards afforded.

The Postmaster, Thomas Butterfield, was not distinguished by suavity or long-suffering patience. On the contrary, he was, at most times, in an ill humour, snappish to customers, and apparently morose. As boys, we had not discernment enough to see what made him such a growler; but a sweeter disposition than that of the old Postmaster was by nature, I fear, might have been soured by the annoyance of having, scores of times during the day, to open a wicket in answer to almost incessant knocks from the outside, admitting each time a rush of cold air from the external atmosphere, and then to serve single postage-stamps to the apprentices and errand-boys, sent to post letters. Such a necessity was enough to aggravate any man, especially one who was getting on in years. The Postmaster of a large town does not now expect to be required to retail out postage-stamps through a square aperture in a window to people standing in the street; but deputes that inferior duty to a junior clerk, who serves stamps across the counter within the Office. Between the boys who went to the old Post Office to stamp and post letters and the Postmaster, a state of irregular warfare would sometimes be maintained. When "old Butterfield," as they called him, kept lads waiting two or three minutes at the port-hole, they would go on hammering at the little door as noisily as they could,

until the Postmaster was driven wild. Then, he would come to them and storm and threaten to catch and thrash them. They, retreating to a safe distance, would fling ribaldry and jibes at the Postmaster. A trick I recollect to have been played upon Mr. Butterfield by two or three conspiring apprentices. A boy whose effrontery was equal to the job, being sent with ten or a dozen letters to post, for which he had to get stamps, made it up with his comrades that he would buy the stamps one at a time, the others watching behind him the effect upon the irascible Postmaster. The youth tapped at the casement, and, on seeing Mr. Butterfield open it, asked for "one stamp." He got it, and the wicket was closed. He affixed it deliberately to a letter, and then knocked again, and asked for "one stamp." This was repeated until the young rascal had obtained stamps for the whole batch of letters, and the reader may fancy what a towering rage "old Butterfield" was in as soon as he found out the trick, yet he could not help but supply the saucy lad's demand for a single stamp as often as it was repeated. No wonder that when these petty duties under such conditions had caused his feelings to be excited to a certain pitch of wrath and disgust, the Postmaster would quit the Post Office in the middle of the forenoon or afternoon for an hour, and seek spirituous solace and refuge from his juvenile tormentors in a hostelry hard by, leaving the Office in charge of his wife until he came back.

For the salary which the Department paid Mr. Butterfield as Postmaster of Blackburn, the constant services of the Postmaster's wife were also retained. Now, Mrs. Butterfield was as gentle and obliging a woman as her husband was liable to be crusty and petulant. She was so attentive and motherly that even those mischief-loving

'prentice-lads could not forshame to cause her additional trouble. Members of the old staff of the Office speak highly of Mrs. Butterfield for her kind treatment of them. She spent some hours daily in assisting in the despatch of the mails and in the routine of the Post Office Having no children, she was able to spare so much of her time from household work. Her assiduity prevented any occasional remissness of the Postmaster from delaying the business of the Office.

So the Blackburn Post Office jogged on in its slow, old-fashioned course, without material increase of its very small staff and simple appliances, from 1840, the year of the institution of penny postage, to 1860. Here I may refer to two or three of the postmen and carriers who were formerly employed, and whose names can be remembered. A portion of the letters to and from Blackburn and Preston were, from fifty to seventy years back, conveyed by a "Foot-Post." William Holland, who died in Blackburn at the age of 47, in December, 1832, had carried the post-bags from this town to Preston and back every day during eleven years, from 1821 to 1832, and it was estimated that on this service he had walked 68,000 miles. Another servant of the local Post Office over a lengthened term, up to within a short time of his death, was Tom Edmundson, whom a few readers may have known as the letter carrier in the town. He served under Mr. Butterfield, and died in 1855. The late Mr. Charles Tiplady was intimate with him, and records in his journal, under date September 26th, 1855:—"Died, Tom Edmundson, the letter carrier. He was in youth a schoolfellow of mine. A very sober, upright, and diligent servant of the Blackburn Post Office." Mr. William Henry Barnes, who is now in the service of the

Blackburn Corporation as clerk in charge of the gas-meter office, was with Mr. Butterfield, as clerk inside the Post Office, about five years, from 1855 to 1860, and he believes that Mr. Butterfield had been Postmaster nearly twenty years before he (Mr. Barnes) took service at the Post Office.

The year 1860 was one of transition and progress at our Post Office. Mr. John Frankland happened to be engaged there at the very time when the first considerable changes were effected, and his description of the staff and the working of the Office just before the new departure is interesting. Blackburn in 1860 contained a population of upwards of 60,000, yet its Post Office was unworthy of a town of 10,000. The whole of the business was then done in a single small room at the end of the house, and the Postmaster and his wife resided on the premises. The room behind the Office was their private sitting-room. All the letters were sorted by the carriers for delivery in the lobby of the house, where a narrow flap-table, with hinges, which could be let down when the job was finished, was fixed against the wall, so that the sorters had barely standing space in what was left of the passage. The staff consisted of the Postmaster himself (Mr. Butterfield) and his wife, who, as already stated, assisted as clerk. William Henry Barnes was the general Clerk. Old George Milner (who is well remembered) was the stamper, and carried the mail bags on his back to and from the railway-station. "Old Foulds" was the senior letter carrier. He retired on account of old age on the last day of 1859, and Mr. Frankland took his place on the first day of 1860. (Foulds died in 1863, as notified in the local papers:—"February 5th, James Foulds, of Snig Brook, for many years a letter carrier

of this town.") A man named Heyes also carried letters in the town, and a young man named Abbott was another carrier. The carriers on the rural rounds were called "messengers." One was old Lingard, who went up Belthorn way, and had a pony to ride upon. Another messenger took the Mellor and Balderstone district. The post to Tockholes was taken out only once a week by a "messenger." The letters for morning delivery in Blackburn came from Preston, and were brought in a mail-cart, arriving about 3.40 a.m.; the man who drove the mail-cart went on to Burnley, and took forward the Blackburn letters for places east of the town. Abbott and John Frankland were the only two town carriers (excepting that Milner delivered a few letters in the middle of the town), and they had to be at the Post Office at five o'clock in the morning to sort their letters. In the delivery, Frankland's district at the start embraced the extended section of the town north of King-street, from Northgate eastward to Wensley-fold westward. On the first morning of his engagement, which was Sunday, he had not finished the delivery until half-an-hour after noon, when the people were coming out of Church. On week-days there were two deliveries in the central and business streets, one from seven o'clock to ten in the morning, the other from six to eight in the evening; and only one delivery daily in the outskirts of the town. The carriers' uniform was a red coat and a tall napless hat. At night Milner took to the Station the whole of the mail-bags made up to eight o'clock. He carried them in a sack upon his back. The wages of the town letter-carriers were fourteen shillings to begin with, and the country "messengers" had twelve shillings a week. Mr. Frankland remembers that on Monday morning, the second day of his employment

at the Post Office, there were few letters to deliver, but on the third morning (Tuesday) there was a very heavy load of letters, and, with his wide district, he was so exhausted and heartbroken with the amount of work that he determined to give up the situation, and stayed at home for several days. Then Mr. Butterfield sent for him, and informed him that a change was about to be made which would divide the work and lighten his labours. That was accomplished forthwith. Two new clerks, Wilkinson and Froggart, were drafted to the Blackburn Post Office from some other office to assist in the inside duties, and half a dozen additional carriers were put on. John Frankland took the Bank Top district. More room was required in the Office, and the Postmaster's sitting-room was appropriated for office purposes. From that date the development of the Postal service in the town has been progressive, to the large and well-provided central Post Office in a building specially designed which the town at present possesses, but which, I hear, already proves to be deficient in accommodation for the immense business which has to be done in it.

Mr. Thomas Butterfield retired in 1861 or early in 1862, and took a house at the lower end of Wellington Street, Strawberry Bank, where he resided until his death, three or four years subsequently. He was succeeded as Postmaster by Mr. Birchall, and the Post Office was removed from the premises in King Street to one of the shops in Corporation Street. Within a few years it was transferred to premises in New Market Street, whence it was finally removed to the new building in Lord Street on its completion.

July 30th, 1865, died, "in his 58th year, Mr. Thomas Butterfield, late Postmaster of this town," as the newspaper obituary records. Mrs. Butterfield outlived him several

years, and also died in the house in Wellington Street. Mr. Butterfield was rather above the middle height, with hair and whiskers turning grey in his latter years. His face wore a frowning expression in keeping with his somewhat cross temper. His portrait, and that of Mrs. Butterfield, were painted by the late Mr. Proctor, but I do not know what became of these portraits. Mr. Butterfield was a Freemason.

XI.—"DICKY" HACKING, MASTER MASON AND QUARRY MASTER.

NOBODY who knew the old townsman whose name heads this article—and who of his generation in Blackburn did not know him?—will dispute the statement that he was a very singular man, who was not only odd to a degree, but missed no occasion for displaying his oddity. Richard Hacking was a native of the old-fashioned sort, and yet there was none of his contemporaries, born upon the sod, from whom he was not distinguished by many points of difference. He was not like his father, neither were his brothers nor any of his kinsmen like him in his natural peculiarities. The writer of a brief notice of him which appeared at the time of his death truly said of him that "his quaint originality often broke out in the form of amusing practical jokes," and "that his workmen came in for a good share of his 'palpable hits.'" He had a ready word-wit or humour, too, and his phrases, allusions, and similes were extremely comical or grotesque, and lost nothing of their effect by being spoken in the broad Lancashire dialect. He ever sought for some visible form of expressing his humour,

and that was the cause of what were called his "practical jokes." He wanted to make the rough fellows who were mostly the butt of his drollery feel the sting of it, and he knew that words alone would not strike them half so hard as a trick or bit of pantomime which he made one of their number perform for his amusement and their admonition. The workmen in his quarries and upon the buildings he reared had plenty of experience of his eccentricities, and were rather too often the victims of his skittishness to relish it. He lost not a few of his most efficient workmen through his habit of "humbugging" them. Other people he often offended by reason of his inability to decline a chance of scoring off them a rude jest or satirical sally.

I will introduce my sketch of Richard Hacking by some particulars of his father, grandfather, brothers, and other relatives. The Hackings are a pretty numerous tribe in the town of Blackburn and one or two surrounding townships. The surname of the clan is apparently derived from the name of the ancient hamlet of Hacking in Billington township, which the reader will best know in connection with the old mansion, Hacking Hall, and the ferry hard by across the Ribble and Calder, called, "Hacking Boat." But it is some centuries since any person bearing the surname owned land on the Hacking freehold. There was one Lawrence Hacking who lived in Oswaldtwistle, and died two hundred years since in 1692. I think it probable that he was an ancestor of our Lower Darwen and Blackburn Hackings, because his name, Lawrence, has been given to members of this branch in several successive generations. Most of the males, in fact, were christened either Lawrence, John, Richard, Thomas, or James, and the first three have been most frequent of all. Besides the branch to which my

subject, Richard Hacking, belonged, and which is noticed below, two or three others have been attached to this locality. One was descended from William Hacking, father of Leonard, and also of John Hacking and Robert Hacking, both of Bar House Fold, in Livesey; the latter, Robert Hacking, was killed many years ago at Dob Hole Bridge, in Lower Darwen. Leonard Hacking, the other brother, son of William, was father of John Hacking. Another John Hacking, who lived near St. John's Church, left a widow, Mrs. Alice Hacking, who died in December, 1872, aged 82. A clergyman in the Eastern Counties, the Rev. R. Hacking, rector of Congham, near Lynn, in Norfolk, is the son of Mr. Richard Hacking, J.P., of Heaton Grove, near Bury, who was the son of James Hacking, a native of Blackburn.

A well-known man in Blackburn now, who has given me a few facts about Mr. Richard Hacking, for whom he worked many years, is James Hacking, of Lower Darwen, Highways Inspector, under the Highways Committee of the Blackburn Corporation. His branch, I dare say, was related to that of his old master. Both families are noticeable for this, that so many of their male members have been working stone-masons. Together, these two "lots" of Lower Darwen and Blackburn Hackings have produced more masons than any other family or clan in the district. James Hacking tells me that his grandfather, James Hacking, was a stone-mason, and that in his generation there were seven brothers, all masons, and three of them lost their lives by accidents whilst following their calling. James Hacking, the grandfather, of Blackburn, mason, was killed about eighty years since, during the building of a factory, at Enfield; his brother, John Hacking, was killed at Horwich

Church, whilst engaged in setting the last stones on the tower or spire; and another brother was fatally injured when working upon the building of Blackburn Parish Church. Another James Hacking, of Lower Darwen, son of the above James, was likewise a mason, and so were his brothers, Robert, Lawrence, William, and Richard. James the son died in 1864, aged 58; and his son was James Hacking, the present road inspector. The latter worked for the Hackings, master builders, as lad and man, nearly 30 years; first for Mr. Lawrence Hacking, and afterwards for his son, Mr. Richard Hacking, and he knows a good deal about the history of the firm, and about the buildings of importance erected by them. He has himself had five sons, all of them stone-masons; one was killed some years ago; and one is now a contractor. James Hacking went as an apprentice to Mr. Lawrence Hacking about the age of 15, in the year 1849. Since he left Mr. Richard Hacking he has been in the service of the Corporation.

The first of this other stock of Hackings, for fifty or sixty years so largely engaged as quarry-masters and builders in Blackburn, whose name is remembered by the oldest living member of the family (Miss Ellen Hacking, of Granville Road, eldest daughter of Lawrence, and sister of Richard, to whom I am indebted for most of the particulars of her kindred), was John Hacking, stone-mason. He was born about 1750-1755, at some place within a few miles of Blackburn. He used to talk about his early home as having been in the neighbourhood of the "Horse Load," which I take to have been the sign of a wayside inn upon one of the high-roads. John Hacking may have been the son of a farmer and worked on a farm himself in his youth, but he afterwards became a mason and removed to Lower Darwen,

where he had built some property. Part of it still exists and belongs to descendants. It is situated in Lower Darwen village, just under the railway bridge near the station, and includes a public-house. John Hacking died at that place, at the age of 84 years, and was buried in Blackburn Parish Churchyard. He had eight children, three sons and five daughters. The sons were, John, Thomas, and Lawrence. All three were stone-masons. John Hacking, the eldest, lived in Blackburn.

Lawrence Hacking, Richard's father, was the youngest son of John, of Lower Darwen, and he was born in the year 1785. He followed his father's trade, and, settling in Blackburn, began business on his own account when a young man. Lawrence Hacking was thrice married. His first wife's name was Alice Thompson, of Lower Darwen. She bore two children, a son, John, and a daughter, Alice, and was dead not later than 1810. The second wife of Lawrence Hacking was Betty Thompson, daughter of Richard Thompson, of Lower Darwen. She was related—it is believed was cousin — to the late Mr. Richard Thompson, father of the late Alderman James Thompson, one of the most prominent of Blackburn men in his day. If she was Richard's cousin, her father, also named Richard, would be brother to James Thompson, of Lower Darwen, father of Richard, and grandfather of the alderman. Betty Thompson was born about 1789, and married about 1811; she was nearly related to her husband's first wife, Alice Thompson. By Betty his wife, Lawrence Hacking had numerous issue, including sons, Richard, and Lawrence; daughters, Ellen, Betty, Isabel, and Nancy, and one or two others who died young. She died, aged 33 years, about seventy years since; and subsequently Lawrence Hacking

married, for his third wife, Margaret Pearson, by whom he had no issue.

Mr. Lawrence Hacking's business career in Blackburn extended over forty years or more, and for some thirty years he had his second son, Richard, in partnership. The first houses he built were in Bent Street, and in one of them he lived. From Bent Street he removed to Billinge Scarr, and kept the farm there as tenant of the late Mr. James Neville, who then owned the estate. That was more than fifty years since. Lawrence Hacking gave up the house, and built a new wing to it, in order that Mr. Henry Brock-Hollinshead, who had married Mr. Neville's daughter, in 1845, might reside there. He also built a house for the farmer in the fold behind the other house, and some of the farm-buildings. Eventually he came to live in the town again, at a house in Montague Street. As quarry-master, Mr. Lawrence Hacking worked the stone-quarries known as Shorrock's Delph and Gillies' Delph, above Grimshaw Park, the Lancaster Delph at Wensley Fold, and the Park Delph on Revidge. These were the only quarries in Blackburn, so that he had the trade in the supply of local stone to himself. But he did the bulk of the building in Blackburn for a long course of years. The first cotton mill he built was for Mr. John Livesey, behind King Street; one of the oldest spinning-mills in the town. He built the old Nova Scotia Mill for the first Mr. Robert Hopwood. It was a stone-built mill, and was destroyed by fire. It is believed that the large mill known as Pilkington's New Mill, now owned by Messrs. W. and J. Taylor, which is of stone, was another of Lawrence Hacking's undertakings. The factories, schools, and public buildings, which he built later, are some of them named hereafter in the sketch of his son and partner, Richard

Hacking. The late Mr. John Smith, another of my "Characters," served his apprenticeship with Lawrence Hacking. "Old Lawrence Hacking," one who worked for him (James Hacking) says, "was a very quiet, civil old man, and never had a wrong word with the men. He didn't like his son's way of humbugging them when he was in that humour." His daughter Ellen possesses an oil portrait of Mr. Lawrence Hacking, painted when he was above seventy years old. It pictures him as a hale old gentleman, with light eyes and silvery hair. His last residence was a house of his at Lower Bank, at the corner on the left of Duke's Brow where it joins Preston New Road. There he died on the 4th of December, 1861, aged 76 years. I have introduced this short account of him, as the leading builder of his day in Blackburn. No biographical notice was published at his death.

John Hacking, eldest son of Lawrence by his first wife, was a stone-mason too; but he had not the ability of his brother Richard. He worked for his father and brother, and at the building of the Town Hall was "gaffer," or foreman, over the masons employed on the work. Lawrence Hacking, younger son of Lawrence, was a mason, and foreman of the men who built Park Road School and other buildings. He died in 1859. He married Ann Ainsworth, whose parents kept the Anchor Inn, in Darwen Street, and left a son and two daughters. His son is Mr. Richard Ainsworth Hacking, who is the chief clerk of the Town Clerk of Blackburn. A daughter of Mr. Lawrence Hacking who survives (Nancy) is the wife of Mr. Thomas Woods, 'till recently of Lord Street, the senior master printer in the town.

My subject, Richard Hacking, or, as he was universally spoken of by his neighbours in his lifetime, "Dicky"

Hacking, was born on the 18th of October, 1812, at Sudell Nook, Lower Darwen. The old tenement so named stands in the middle of a plot of ground between the Haslingden Road and the north-east corner of the Guide Reservoir of Blackburn Waterworks. His father, Lawrence Hacking, must therefore have been living at Sudell Nook in 1812. Richard cannot have had much schooling, which for boys intended for mechanical trades was then thought superfluous. He commenced working for his father whilst very young. Though always odd in his ways, he was a capable, smart lad, and so soon as he could call himself a man his father made him a partner. There was a grand opening for a builder in Blackburn when the development of the cotton manufacture consequent upon the invention and local improvements of the power-loom took place. New factories were projected by the monied men, and rose in quick succession. Lawrence and Richard Hacking got the lion's share of all the building jobs going, say, from 1833, when Richard was 21 years of age, to 1861, when the father, Lawrence, died. I have already mentioned the King Street, Nova Scotia, and Park Place Mills, as the father's work. After Richard became partner, the pair erected the Navigation Mill for Messrs. Forrest; the foundry and three cotton mills for Mr. Joseph Harrison; the Waterfall Mills for Mr. John Fish; Griffin Mills for Mr. Thomas Dugdale; the foundry and a cotton mill for Mr. William Dickinson; Ordnance and Wellington Mills for the elder Mr. William Coddington; the Corn Mill for Messrs. Greenwood; Albion Cotton Mill for the elder Mr. George Whiteley; Cicely Bridge Mill for Mr. John Baynes; Hollin Bank Mill for Mr. James Thompson; Swallow Street Mill for Mr. Henry Ward; Messrs. Firth and Sturdy's Mill; Bridgewater Mill,

etc. This is a numerous list of big mills, but it is not complete. The Hackings did a good deal of building for Mr. Hornby, senior, at the Brookhouse Mills. Then the Railways began to be brought into and through the town, and there was a great quantity of work for masons in building passenger stations and goods warehouses, bridges, etc. Messrs. Hacking were much engaged in that branch of work from 1845 to 1850; in particular, they built the Bolton Road Station, a large and solid stone structure opened about 1850, since demolished. Another piece of work for public use was Park Road School, built by Messrs. Hacking for the Messrs. Pilkington in the year 1850. Two years later, they, in conjunction with Mr. William Stones for the woodwork, obtained the contract for the erection of the Blackburn Town Hall, the largest public edifice which they reared. It was erected in the years 1852-1856, and cost about £30,000 before it was opened. It is considered by builders a remarkable example of solid workmanship. Richard Hacking, in after years, often talked, half bewailing, half boasting, of how much money his firm lost on that contract. Not long before his death, he said to Mr. Wilkinson, the Town Hall keeper:—"If thee an' me hed o' th' brass aw lost i' this place ('Dicky' was sitting in the Town Hall at the time), we shud be weel off as long as we lived. We hedn't getten th' wo's aboon cellar heigh when a shillin' a day hed to be put on masons' wages. Then th' Russian War brooak eawt; an' we couldn't ged eawr timber eawt o' th' Baltic; an' th' lead wer a' wanted for bullets, so id went up i' price; an' th' iron wer wanted for cannon balls, so id rooas too." Thus, having to pay a lot more money than they had estimated for wages and materials, "Dicky" asserted that the contractors lost a

fabulous sum on building the Town Hall. I can believe that they did lose, though the extras allowed amounted to some thousands of pounds; but as to the extent of the loss, "Dicky's" proneness to exaggeration when talking on topics like that may be borne in mind. At any rate, the Town Hall is a monument of the honest purpose of its builders to make a perfect piece of work.

Lawrence and Richard Hacking built two or three churches, and a number of the largest mansions and villas of the affluent townsmen on Preston New Road, towards Billinge End and Beardwood, around the Park, and in other suburbs; but it is not as a builder that I am concerned with Richard Hacking, but as a humorist and a whimsical character; and I must devote my remaining space to reminiscences which exhibit his peculiarities.

Of the many characteristic stories of Richard Hacking—his peculiar humour and sarcasm, and whim, and habit of playing comical tricks and serving out those who happened to offend him—which once were current in the town, the following are still remembered by friends who have repeated them to me, or in some instances came under my own notice.

Richard Hacking one day met in the road a man whom he knew, who was out of work and badly off, and who appealed to him for help. He bade the poor chap go to his delph, get hold of a wheelbarrow, and wheel it across the ground, tipping it every minute or two as if it was loaded, until he (Mr. Hacking) arrived. The man went, and did exactly as "Dicky" had instructed him. Of course, the "gaffer" at the quarry soon observed him at his odd game, imagined him to be "wrang i' th' head," and was going to stop him; but the man persisted in wheeling about

his empty barrow, and tipping it as before, saying that "th' mayster hed towd him." As soon as Mr. Hacking appeared, the foreman reported the circumstance, when the master said, "Aye, it's reight; tha'll hev to find that chap a job," and he was accordingly set to a proper job.

It was "a word and a blow" with "Dicky"; if any workman did something amiss, or provoked his master, he was "sacked" then and there. One day he ordered a man off the ground, and said he must not start again until he had seen him. The man took himself away, but he knew "Dicky's" ways and whims, and thought he would try the effect of a little joke of his own, after his employer's example. Next morning he planted himself in Preston New Road near the Park gates, to watch for the departure of Mr. Hacking from his house. He at that time lived in one of the two semi-detached stone houses opposite the Park entrance. In a while the man saw Richard leave the house, and presently meet a neighbour with whom he stopped to have a word or two. The workman no sooner caught a glimpse of his master than he went his way, unobserved by Mr. Hacking. He proceeded to the yard, or the delph, and resumed his work "as if nowt wur." He was challenged by the foreman, but answered that he had seen his master, and it was all right. A little later Mr. Hacking came upon the ground. The foreman informed him that the workman he had dismissed the previous day had turned up again, and was working. "Dicky" said: "Aw towd him he mutn't start agean 'till he see me." The Foreman: "He says he has sin yo'." "Dicky": "It's a lie—fotch him here." The workman was brought up, and asked by Mr. Hacking, "Does tha meon to say as tha's sin me?" "Aye," said the man, "aw see yo i' Preston Rooad, talkin' to so-and-so, this

morning." Mr. Hacking's anger was instantly appeased by the fellow's bit of humour, and he closed the incident by telling him to get off to his work.

Nicknames were formerly so common among workmen that nearly every man and lad had one, given to him by his mates. The men, too, had a nickname for their master, by which he was referred to amongst themselves. "Dicky" Hacking's men nicknamed him "Pablo." ("Pablo" was noted in those days as the proprietor of a travelling circus.) On one occasion a workman on the road called at the delph or stone-yard of Mr. Hacking, and asked of a quarryman or a mason the name of the owner of the place. "Pablo," was the reply. The master was about, and the stranger, supposing that "Pablo" was really his name, went to Mr. Hacking and addressed him: "Mester Pablo, can yo' find me a job?" Mr. Hacking: "Whoa towd thee to call me Pablo?" The man said it was one of the men working there who had told him. He was bidden to go round and pick the man out, and bring him to Mr. Hacking. He did so, and to the culprit "Dicky" said, 'Mester Pablo orders thee to go hoam, and thee" (to the stranger) "tek his shop."

Mr. William Brindle relates to me this incident. Mr. Richard Hacking was building, about forty years ago, the mill which now belongs to Mr. Thomas Mitchell Eccles, on the bank of the river Darwen in the Livesey suburb of Blackburn. One of the masons employed on the job was not working fast enough for his master, who knew what an average workman ought to get through. Mr. Hacking went to this mason and said: "Does tha know wheere they sell saut [salt]?" "Aye," the man replied, "Riding at th' Stakes Ho' farm sells id." "Heaw is it sowd?" asked the master. "Oh, abeawt fourpence a lump," was the reply.

Mr. Hacking gave the man fourpence, and sent him to fetch a lump of salt. When he came back he wanted to know what he had to do with the salt. He was bidden to "clap it down on that flag and smash it wi' thi hommer." The mason did so, and was told to make it still smaller. "Na' then," said "Dicky," "spreed it o'er that stoan tha's bin workin' on, so as it [the stone] ull keep till tha works for me agean." This was Mr. Hacking's way of letting the man know that he must leave off working.

Mr. Hacking's whims were often more detrimental to himself than to anybody else. A carter, whose cart was loaded with sand for him, asked Mr. Hacking where he was to tip it. Richard thought the fellow should have known, without telling, where to empty his cart, and in his momentary huff said, "tip it i' th' canal." The carter went right off to the nearest point where he could back his cart to the edge of the canal, and without staying "to reason why" tipped his load of sand into the canal as he was ordered.

A townsman heard this from a former workman of Mr. Hacking. He had an order to build a boundary wall of no great length at the end of a garden. Shortly after it was begun, "Dicky" went to look after the work. The man who was building the wall asked what height he was to go, and the answer he got was, "Never mind, thee go on while I tell tha to stop." The man went on day after day; his master had forgotten all about it, and when at last he went to the job, the wall was getting to nearly twenty feet high. It had to be pulled down to the required height.

Richard Hacking had some work at Darwen, and he wanted to put another man upon the job. He told the man to go and wait at the Ewood toll-bar until he came, and he would take him up in his gig. The man went, and waited

all that day. He went the next day, and the next, and so on until noon on the Saturday, when he went to the office for his wages. He was asked what he had been doing all the week. He replied, "Aw've bin waitin' on th' Darren rooad for th' gaffer, as he towd ma to do." His statement could not be denied, and his wages were paid.

Once Richard Hacking had an order for a very large stone (probably an engine-bed). He promised it for a certain time. The time came, but not the stone. Excuses and a fresh promise were made. The engine was ready for fixing, still the stone did not come. At length the employer, out of all patience, insisted on going to the quarry. There was no help for it; "Dicky" was obliged to go with him. Arrived at the quarry, they looked for the stone in vain. At last "Dicky" took his customer to a place where, in the lowest part, the water had gathered to a considerable depth. "There," said "Dicky," "th' stooan is in yon hoile, and th' rain watter hes flowed in and covered it up." As a matter of fact, the water had been there for months, perhaps for years.

A workman, who was extremely thin, addressed Mr. Hacking, applying for employment. Richard surveyed him critically for half-a-minute, and then said to him, "Goo, and find a crowbar, and then howd it streyt up i' front on tha. If aw con se' tha at back o' th' crowbar, tha hes a job; if aw connot se' tha, tha hesn't."

Lads in an office or workshop, even more than grown men, are apt to feel the time pass slowly while they are employed. If there be a clock in the place, or a public clock to be seen, they want to consult it pretty often during working hours. Richard Hacking, on a certain forenoon, entering his place of business, met one of his junior clerks

in the doorway, coming out. Suddenly confronted by his master, who demanded where he was going, the lad replied simply that he was "nobbut goin' to see what time it wur." Mr. Hacking told him he must first go the delph. and tell a man whom he named that his master wanted him. He went, and when the man he fetched presented himself, his master asked him, "Con ta tell t' time?" He said he could. "Then go an see what time it is neaw." He went out to see some public or other clock they usually went by, and came back and gave the time of day to his master. Richard looked at his watch, and then said to the man, "That's reight; neaw, aw want thee to goo eawt abeawt every heawr, fro' nine o'clock to stoppin' time, an' to come back an' tell these lads what time it is. Will that be oft enuff for yo?" he inquired, turning to the junior clerks, whom he had caught in the attempt to ascertain how the time was getting on. This was his method of shaming them, but if the order he gave was carried out, and, if so, for how long, my informant did not state.

A similar incident, exemplifying Mr. Hacking's caustic humour towards his clerks, is communicated by Mr. John Copland. While Mr. Richard Hacking had his office in Darwen-street, he one day went in when least expected, and found his clerk sitting cosily before the fire. Upon seeing his master, he jumped up quickly. "Nay," said "Dicky," "sit still, tha looks varra comfortable, and I'll send tha a long pipe, 'bacca, and a newspaper, and a chap to wheel tha hoam to thi' dinner." The master went out, and in a few minutes a lad arrived with the promised pipe and paper. When the dinner time came round, a labourer came up to the office door, wheeling a barrow, and said, "Dicky says I've to wheel tha hoam i' th' barrow."

A friend has reminded me that Mr. Richard Hacking, when he built the villa at the top of East Park Road for his own residence, inserted stone instead of glass in the narrow windows of the top storey, and the attics were therefore unlighted from the outside. He blocked these windows, as he said, partly to prevent that portion of the building being liable to assessment for rates, and also so that the servants, who slept in the attics, "couldn't see what time it was when they went to bed and got up."

Mr. Richard A. Hacking tells me the next amusing story of his uncle, which illustrates Mr. Richard Hacking's fondness for what in slang phraseology is styled "taking a rise" out of some one. He was then living in East Park Road, in the villa just mentioned. He had watched the policemen detailed to patrol that suburb, and had convinced himself that after dark, at any rate, they did not perambulate that upper portion of the road bounding the Park on the east side; but stopped and turned back at the cross-road now named Lilford Road. A burglary had been committed at one of the villas up there, and the housebreakers had encountered no police, and had got off with their booty. The late Mr. Potts was then Chief Constable. "Dicky" had a little plot for bringing the police to a due sense of their neglect. The first time he saw a policeman, late at night, patrolling not far from his house, he went over to him, and in the friendliest manner and with the most seductive tone of voice he could assume, invited him to step into the house for a few minutes. The unsuspecting constable accepted the proposal, and went in. He was conducted into the kitchen, and as soon as he was comfortably seated, and whilst the servant was fetching some refreshment for him, Mr. Hacking began upon his man after this fashion:—

"Aw'm glad to si tha. Tha'rt quite a curiosity. Aw hevn't sin one like thee reawnd this way aw dunnot kno' when. Tha *art* a stranger to be seure. Ma' thisel at hoam. Neaw tha's fun' thi way up here tha'll ha' to stop." The constable began to see that he had fallen into a trap, and after listening abashed to some more of "Dicky's" "trotting," he respectfully hinted that he was on duty and could not prolong his call. "Eh, but aw'm not goin' to part wi' tha. When aw do find a curiosity aw keep it. As long as tha'rt i' th' heawse we sharn't be feard o' them burglars. When they break in here will'nt they be surprised when a bobby's i'th heawse an' springs onto 'em? Thear's a revolver for tha to shoot 'em wi." The constable at the end of another half-hour became very unhappy and restive. But Mr. Hacking had not done with him yet, and he detained him until he was sick with fear that his inspector would come round, and he be unable to show himself on his beat. Richard remarked reproachfully, "What's thi' hurry? Some folk isn't satisfied anywheer. Ther's whisky for tha, an' still tha'rt not content." At last he allowed the constable to escape, which he did with much alacrity.

Mr. Robert Eastwood, ex-Superintendent of the Borough Police Force, has written down what he remembers of the same incident as follows. The knocking-up of the neighbour which he tells of, by Richard Hacking, evidently was immediately after he fell in with the constable in the road, but was before he took him into his house; whilst Mr. R. A. Hacking amplifies his uncle's narration of what passed while he had the constable "in custody," so to speak, and at his mercy in his kitchen. Mr. Eastwood says:—"Mr. Richard Hacking built (excepting the addition at the back by Mr. Adam Dugdale, to whom he sold the house) the stone

house now occupied by Mr. Wm. Taylor, J.P. He lived there some time without any front door [or steps]; having only a back entrance. He was always complaining that he never saw a policeman, either by day or night. One morning, about two o'clock, he was returning home quite jolly, when he met a policeman near Mr. Baynes's house (now Mr. Joseph Dugdale's). Mr. Hacking said, 'Well, this is the first policeman I have ever seen since I came to live in this district. Come and go with me.' The policeman was a young officer, and did not know Mr. Hacking, but went with him. He took the officer up the garden walk of a gentleman well-known in that neighbourhood at the time, and went up to the front door and violently rang the night-bell. The gentleman very reluctantly got up and raised his bedroom window, shouting, 'Who's there?' Mr. Hacking called the gentleman by his name, and said, 'What do you think, I have found a police, and I have brought him for you to look at.' The gentleman, anything but pleased, said, 'Get away home with you,' and closed the window. Mr. Hacking then said to the policeman, 'I have not done with you yet. You must go with me to my house and have a glass of the best mountain dew, and then you can go on your way rejoicing.' The officer went with him, had his glass, and they parted good friends."

"Some twenty years ago," also writes Mr. Eastwood, "P.C. John Rostron (now deceased) found in Northgate two £100 notes. He reported the case to Mr. Eastwood, and gave up the notes, which were advertised. Some fortnight after, Mr. Richard Hacking called at the Police Office and reported that he had lost two £100 notes. When asked if he knew the numbers, he opened his pocket book and gave the numbers which corresponded with those found.

Mr. Eastwood said, 'Well, Mr. Hacking, I think I have them.' He said, 'Who's found them?' Mr. Eastwood said, 'A policeman.' He said, 'What, what! You don't mean to tell me that you can have a policeman as honest as that?' Mr. Eastwood said, 'That is so in this case.' Mr. Hacking: 'Well, all I can say is, there are some of you who have grand stripes on your arms, who are not as honest as he. That policeman ought to have stripes on both arms, and one on his back.' Mr. Hacking repeated: 'A policeman finding all that money and turning it up kills my pig.' Mr. Eastwood gave Mr. Hacking the notes, saying, 'Well, Mr. Hacking, I think you ought to remember this honest policeman.' Mr. Hacking said, 'Aye, he deserves a fiver,' and left a £5 note for him. On leaving the office he said, 'It's the first time I ever thought there was an honest policeman.' The case was duly reported to the Finance Committee, and the officer was allowed to receive the £5 note."

"Some years after the above incident," Mr. Eastwood further relates, "Mr. Hacking and his family went to attend divine service one Sunday night at St. John's Church, and, in their absence, his house was entered and ransacked by thieves, who took jewellery and other articles. Mr. Hacking after this was several Sundays and did not go to church, staying at home to guard his house. The late Rev. J. Baker, Vicar of St. John's, noticing Mr. Hacking's absence, called upon him to see what was the matter. Mr. Hacking's reply to the vicar was, 'Mr. Baker, you know what it says in that good old book, and I have often heard you repeat it, that we are both to watch and pray! Now, while I was at your church the other Sunday night, praying, my house was broken into by thieves, and ever since then I

have stopped at home watching. Now you see, Mr. Baker, I have done what you commanded me to do. I have both watched and prayed, and I think I am a good man.' 'Very good,' replied the vicar."

Richard Hacking was not without the usual professional jealousy or distrust of other builders' work. When the new Congregational Church in Chapel-street was built, tenders were, in the first instance, obtained from the principal Blackburn builders, but they all exceeded so much the architect's estimate, that the building committee were taken aback, and asked an explanation of the architect, who was Mr. Tarring, a Devonshire man. Mr. Tarring did not understand how it was, but said he thought he could find a good firm of builders in Devonshire who would erect the church for about the sum he had estimated. So he was requested to try, and a Mr. Luscombe gave a tender which was near the mark, and was accepted. The Devonshire builder brought his plant and all his workmen with him. Mr. Hacking watched the stranger's way of carrying out the work with critical curiosity. The writer of this sketch met Mr. Hacking near the site one day. He began to talk about the building which was rising, and said to me, "See, they'n built that heavy teawr an' heigh spire upo' a quicksand, an' it'll never stand. It's bound to fall some day, and I'se never walk under it, lest it should fall at top o' me. If I hev to go that way, I'll walk reaund by th' next oppenin' before I'll pass under that teawr." I mentioned Mr. Hacking's prediction, that the tower would certainly fall, to the late Mr. Thomas Higson, who was the practical man on the building committee, and he assured me that the foundation of the tower, laid on a thick bed of concrete, was firm enough, although there was quicksand in the ground thereabouts,

and that he had no fear whatever that Mr. Hacking would prove a true prophet.

A gentleman who is now one of the elder solicitors in Blackburn gave me the next item. Not long after my informant began to practice, a client instructed him to recover from Mr. Hacking a small debt. He commenced by writing him a respectful letter, drawing his attention to the account, and wishing him to settle it. No notice whatever was taken of that by Richard. So, after a few days, the solicitor wrote a second letter, in terms more pressing and peremptory. Still no notice was taken; so the next step was to send the debtor a writ, and that was done. A couple of days after, Mr. Hacking walked into the solicitor's office. The latter quite expected an explosion, and, being a young practitioner, thought it proper and prudent to speak softly and somewhat apologetically to his visitor, saying he was sorry to have to take the course he had done, but he had no option. Mr. Hacking stopped him with, "Settle that bill, and say nowt about it. There's no occasion to mek excuses. Yo're t' best friend as I hev. I've ta'en this writ wi' me, an' show'd it to a lot o' folk as owe me money, and said, 'See what yo'n browt me to by not paying me what yo' owe me'; an' I've raised five hundred peawnd by th' use o' that writ. Say nowt—yo're t' best friend I hev."

My collection of anecdotes respecting Mr. Hacking, and notes of his funny sayings are not exhausted. I should be sorry if, by giving the publicity of print to a number of his droll pranks, and his witticisms spoken in the dialect, which would lose their raciness, and some of their point, if repeated in what is called polite English, I left the impression upon readers who never knew Mr. Hacking in his lifetime that he was altogether a "rough diamond." In his proper manner

he was neither coarse nor illiterate, but correct enough for all useful purposes in a none too refined or fastidious provincial society like ours. In addressing his rude quarrymen and other workmen in their own style of colloquial talk, Mr. Hacking only did what almost every native employer of labour in this part of Lancashire habitually did throughout the fifty years that he was a master tradesman in Blackburn, and what many of them do still. But Mr. Hacking in the company of gentlemen had a different style of speech at his command. He was not only shrewdly observant, but well informed on various subjects, and especially in the lore and science of his own craft as a master builder. His humour was a flowing spring, but it could not manifest what was the most admirable and distinguishing trait of the man—I mean his determination that his work as a builder should be done well and solidly—a quality not to be overlooked in these days of scanting and "jerry" building. Most builders will put in good work if they are paid to do so; but Mr. Richard Hacking had such a dislike to bad work, and the discredit attached to those who were responsible for it, that many a time he made up his mind that he would lose money, more than he could afford, by a job, rather than spoil it and shame himself by flimsy construction, and the use of the worst materials. He did not spare his scorn for the rotten and slovenly structures run up cheaply to last a few years and then tumble down from sheer instability. An instance of how Mr. Hacking would sacrifice his own money, sooner than execute poorly-paid work in the commonest manner, is told. A gentleman who, thirty years ago, owned and resided in a large house two or three miles out from Blackburn, employed Mr. Hacking to build a wall round his shrubberies and gardens. A common rubble wall had been stipulated

for, and a price named for that. Mr. Hacking thought, however, such a wall would look mean, and he took upon himself to make an alteration (informing the gentleman, who neither sanctioned nor forbade the change), and built a strong and sightly "Cumberland" wall round the grounds. On the settlement, the rich man refused to pay for the more expensive masonry of the better wall, and thus left Mr. Hacking the loser by a very considerable amount, as his reward for giving the first-class wall instead of a much inferior one. That wall still stands, and will for many a year, but on its builder's books it represents a heavy loss; and not long before he died, Richard Hacking referred with bitterness to this and other instances in which he had given, for the sake of his reputation, but also for the benefit of those for whom he built, better work than he had bargained for, and afterwards had been refused any extra payment. The many large buildings and works in stone which Mr. Richard Hacking, and his father, Mr. Lawrence Hacking, erected, and which we see in all directions when we stand upon the surrounding heights and look down upon the town of Blackburn, its public buildings, factories, mansions and villas, ought to have realised profits in the aggregate that would have made them rich, but the actual results, I fear, were but moderate.

I have learnt—what also it is pleasing to record—that, when a young man about the age of 21, Mr. Richard Hacking became connected with the Sunday School of St. Peter's Church, then in the old school-house in Bent-street, first as a teacher, and afterwards as superintendent, and, for a period of from ten to fifteen years, he continued his active labours in that Sunday School. In the same school he commenced and taught a night-school on two or

three nights in the week, for the instruction of the factory children of that generation who got little or no schooling in day-schools. He taught them the elements of the "three R's." Mr. Hacking was one of the founders of a circulating library at Bent-street School, and was for a few years secretary to the Sick Society. He taught himself shorthand at a time when shorthand writing was a rare accomplishment amongst young men.

In 1862, Mr. Richard Hacking entered the Town Council as a Councillor for Park Ward. He served for six years in that capacity, and then lost his seat in a contest at the municipal election in 1868. That year all the six wards were fought, but the closest contests were in St. Paul's and Park Wards, carried by the Liberals, and in St. Mary's and Trinity Wards, won by the Conservatives. In Park Ward the candidates were Mr. Shackleton and Mr. John Deane (Liberals), and Mr. William Coddington and Mr. Richard Hacking (Conservatives). The poll resulted:—Shackleton, 849; Deane, 845; Coddington, 778; Hacking, 776 Mr. Hacking did not subsequently seek a seat in the Town Council.

Richard Hacking was a plain man in appearance, of about middle height, and, originally, strongly built and capable of much hard work. His face was round-featured. Constant exposure to sun, wind and rain had tanned his face and neck to a purplish brown. He generally wore a dark blue overcoat, a well-weathered tall hat and black trousers. He walked with a slow step and a downward gaze, affected by many of our old tradesmen. He was inclined to be talkative with any neighbour who might fall in his way, and in his remarks he was hard upon the Corporate authorities and public officials. His experiences had made him

somewhat of a disappointed man, and a cynic, in his old age A year or two before his death, he had a very serious illness, from which he recovered, and, to a townsman who met him when he began to walk out, and remarked that he was glad to see him out again, he replied, "Aye, I shall live to *bother 'em* for a good while yet." He was laid aside by incurable ailments for several months before his death. He had married, in 1842, Alice Whalley, daughter of Mr. John Whalley, manufacturer, of Wrangling, Blackburn. Of five children, three, a son, Mr. Thomas Hacking, and two daughters, are now living. Mr. Richard Hacking died, at the age of 71 years, on December 1st, 1883.

XII.—"TOM" MULLINEAUX, BUTCHER AND COUNCILMAN.

IN the subject of my present sketch we have a singular instance of a man, after having spent the greater part of a lifetime in the steady pursuit of his own private business—taking no apparent notice of what was going on in civic and public affairs, beyond giving his vote quietly at election times to the candidates of his party—all at once, on accepting an invitation to become a member of the Town Council, bursting into full blossom as a public man, obtrusive, irrepressible, always on his legs in Council meetings and committees, with something to say on every topic that was uppermost, and every job that was on hand. And subsequently, after a few years of stormy participation in town's business, subsiding into a more absolute retirement and silence than he had maintained before he entered the arena in which more or less ambitious, more or less able, citizens contend for honours, influence, or mastery in local government. Thomas Mullineaux, in middle age, was physically as fine a specimen of the old-fashioned Lancashire man of the yeoman or tradesman class as one could wish to see. He was tall, stout, and square-built, inclining to portliness; his head was high towards the back, where phrenologists locate the "bump" of firmness, and rested upon a short, strong neck; his hair dark and thin; his face

was broad and well-featured, with hearty, honest expression upon it; a mouth firm-set, with thin lips; and black eyes, bright and clear in their glance. His character and qualities were in keeping with the outward man. He was a comfortable neighbour and a fast friend; transparent in thought and frank in speech; as a tradesman he would take advantage of no man, but would not soon forgive anyone who tried to take advantage of him. His individuality was remarkably strong; his will was unbending; his spirit assertive and pugnacious; and nothing could move him from a thing upon which he had set his mind. In short, he was a perfect John Bull for dogged obstinacy and tenacity in fight, as well as for bluff straightforwardness. Born in 1810, he had entered business as a butcher, whilst a young man, and had prosecuted it so diligently, capably, and with such profitable results, that before old age came on he had gained a competency, and, at the age of 55, had exchanged the description of butcher for that of retired gentleman.

Politically, Thomas Mullineaux was a staunch Tory of the good old "Church and King" school. Mr. William Henry Hornby, senior, at one time the Conservative leader in Blackburn, was his personal friend, and in his business he counted amongst his customers some of the most wealthy families in the town. It was a strange event that one, always regarded as a Tory of the Tories, a renouncer of Radicalism and all its works, whilst he remained a private man—a prosperous butcher and nothing more—should have become a persistent caviller at the proceedings of the representatives of the party in power in municipal affairs, which was his own party, and a thorn in the side of the responsible leaders of it, during nearly the whole term of his service in the Town Council.

Mr. Thomas Mullineaux became a member of the Blackburn Town Council in November, 1865, to fill a vacancy in the representation of St. Mary's Ward caused by the election to be an alderman of the former occupant of the seat. He was regularly nominated as a Conservative, and his election was not opposed by the Liberals. During the first twelve months of his service as a Councilman, Mr. Mullineaux did not figure much in the public proceedings of the Town Council, although, probably in the committees upon which he was placed, he began to display his characteristic spirit by asking inconvenient questions, and pressing them with pertinacity until he was satisfied with the answers officially vouchsafed to him. One Corporate official, I recollect, who did not hold one of the highest offices under the Corporation, used to speak, behind his back, disrespectfully of "Tom" Mullineaux as a "meddlesome Matty." He had only one year to serve, of the term for which he was elected on the first occasion, but he still stood so far well with his party at the expiration of that year that he was again nominated as the Conservative Candidate for St. Mary's Ward, and, along with his colleague, Mr. Henry Polding, was re-elected on the 1st of November, 1866. The Ward was contested by the Liberals, but only in a perfunctory manner. Mr. James Boyle, who had formerly been, during many years as Councillor and Alderman, a leading man in municipal affairs, but had been out of the Council five years, was nominated in 1866 for St. Mary's Ward without his consent, and it being reported that he refused to serve if elected, a number of burgesses who might otherwise have voted for him did not think it worth while to poll. The ex-Town Clerk, Mr. Henry Seward, was also independently nominated; but he was not a favourite with

the Liberals, although he had a certain encouragement from that side, in his attempt to recover compensation for his summary dismissal, from the office of Town Clerk, by the Conservative majority in the Town Council. Mr. Mullineaux and Mr. Polding were returned by majorities considerable for that small Ward.

Early in 1867, "Tom" Mullineaux developed in the Town Council a tendency to adopt a line of his own, and to assume the critic with respect to the decisions of the predominant section of the Council, as ruled by the Conservative leaders or the Corporate officials. His weapons of defence were not very sharp or deadly, for he was unpractised as a debater, but his attack, if not skilful, was heavy, and he was a troublesome adversary to shake off. At the period of Mr. Mullineaux's forthcoming as a challenger in the civic tilting-ground, the late Alderman James Thompson was leader of the Council, Mr. John Smith was Mayor. and Mr. Beck was Town Clerk. These three, by virtue of their respective positions, had principal parts to act in the settlement of questions which came before the Town Council; and, by his objecting to and controverting what was done and proposed, Councillor Mullineaux got into frequent collision with one or other of the trio. The Town Clerk, though forced to stand and repel the doughty Councillor's impetuous charges, was obliged to observe the courtesies and proprieties of procedure, but "Jack" Smith, invested though he was with the dignity of the Mayor's office, in his sparrings with "Owd Tom" was under no such restraint, and retorted as roughly and rudely as he knew how to do. Alderman James Thompson, who was master of the situation, in a more emphatic sense than either Mayor or Town Clerk, controlling the Council as he did and they

did not, was much more contemptuous and unmerciful in his manner of dealing with Councillor Mullineaux's imputations and carpings, when once he was convinced of old "Tom's" deliberate intention to impeach his government and to rebel against his leadership. Of course, the Liberals were delighted to witness "Tom's" defiances of the masterful chief of his own party, and were ready to back him in his fearless reprehension of acts of the ruling powers, which he regarded as blunders, or as jobs, or as a wasteful expenditure of money taken from the burgesses' pockets, or as involving injustice to somebody who had claims upon the Corporation. In particular, the late Mr. William Gregson, after he got into the Council, was full of ardour in the party fight, and was never reluctant to ride by "Tom" Mullineaux's side in his frequent raids upon the Tory quarters; and he would often continue the chaffing contest with Alderman Thompson or "Jack" Smith, the Mayor, after the old warrior had been wounded or unhorsed. But "Tom" Mullineaux himself, though sometimes worsted in the fray, never owned himself beaten; and though he might be voted down, he was not to be talked down.

The subjects which supplied matter for "Tom's" strictures, or for the counter-attacks of his antagonists, during the years 1867 and 1868, were such as the demands of the dismissed Town Clerk, Mr. Seward; the new Town Clerk's definition of duties; and the new building intended for the Fish Market,—the latter a bungled business throughout, which gave rise to a series of wrangles in the Council Chamber Mr. Mullineaux, was to some extent, answerable for the Fish Market mistake, for he was an advocate of it, and an active member of the Markets Committee. He was therefore in the position of defender, and Alderman James

Thompson of assailant, in the repeated passages of arms upon that undertaking. At Council Meetings, held in June and July, 1868, Councillor Thomas and Alderman James had lively bouts, the second arising upon the Fish Market scheme. As a specimen of the style of sarcastic banter which used to be exchanged by these two uncompromising Conservatives, I extract, as follows, a portion of their remarks respecting each other spoken at a Council Meeting in June, 1868. Mr. Thompson had at a previous meeting made some allusion to Mr. Mullineaux in his absence, which the latter resented as a slighting reflection; and so old "Tom" took the first occasion to retaliate upon James.

The *Blackburn Times* reported that Councillor Mullineaux said "he wished to refer to something which had been said in his absence by Alderman Thompson at the last meeting of the Council. He was rather surprised that a gentleman like Alderman Thompson, who thought he was endowed with wisdom as never man was since Solomon's day, should have made such remarks. He wished to tell him that he had never heard anything about the purchasing of a wall belonging to the Market. So he might tell Alderman Thompson that he spoke that which was contrary to the truth. Then as to his (the speaker's) economy, he begged leave to tell Alderman Thompson that, if he had sought to benefit the ratepayers, he, and one or two other members of the Council, might have saved the Corporation £2,000 in the action Feilden *versus* the Corporation."

Alderman James Thompson, in reply, said "he did not know that he had ever witnessed a more pleasing occasion since he had the honour of being a member of the Council. He was sure every member of the Council must have been well pleased to see the manifest state of the

worthy representative of St. Mary's Ward, and they could not but feel grateful for his safe delivery; and it certainly pleased him to see that he had got through so easily. Councillor Mullineaux had gone about from day to day, telling it confidentially to this and that gentleman, 'Ah, I'll wallop him at the next Council meeting.' Having escaped the danger of premature delivery, it was gratifying to find amongst them a gentleman so intelligent and so courageous. The burgesses of St. Mary's Ward had been most fortunate in their representative. Just look at the £2,000 which would have been saved if other wards had been as careful in selecting their councillors. What he alluded to, at a previous meeting, was upon the Minutes of the Markets Committee, with respect to a deed which had been made with Alderman Stones and his brother two or three years ago, and which some of them with the wisdom of Solomon before them had been trying to upset, although it was signed and sealed in due legal form. If he was rightly informed, Councillor Mullineaux, at one meeting, was frightfully alarmed because there was presented to him what is technically known as the section of the wall, and he got it upside down because he did not understand it, and was afraid that the wall would fall upon him in the committee-room."

Mr. Mullineaux had a chance for reprisal when, at the next meeting of the Town Council, a letter from Alderman James Thompson, for some reason resigning his seat, was read. A motion was made and carried that he be asked to withdraw his resignation; but Mr. Mullineaux offered an amendment that the resignation be accepted, on the ground that, he said, "I think the business of the Council could be conducted respectably provided he did not attend."

On the occasion of the laying of the corner-stone of the

Fish Market (now No. 2 Market House), in October, 1868, Councillor Mullineaux was prominent. He handed the mallet to the Mayor (John Smith), who laid the stone, and, in so doing, Mr. Mullineaux delivered a short speech in support of the scheme, which Mr. James Thompson and a strong party in the Council had discountenanced.

A time came when Mr. Mullineaux had it in his power to make the heads of the Conservative party, to which he at least in political opinion always adhered, realize that, contumeliously as he had been treated (the consequence, no doubt, of his own intractable and antagonistic conduct), his support was of some value to the party, and that the loss of it, at a critical juncture, might have been a very serious one. The Conservatives had not then the assured ascendancy in the Town Council they have since enjoyed. They had been inactive in outside organization whilst, for several years, the Liberals had been active and spending money freely (Mr. J. Gerald Potter being the unstinting provider of funds), with the steady aim of regaining the sway in the municipal administration which they had lost in 1861. They had carried six seats out of twelve at the November elections in 1866, and nine seats at those of 1867; and they calculated that, with determined efforts, they would be able to secure, at any rate, three wards out of the six (possibly four) at the Municipal elections of 1868, which immediately preceded the Parliamentary election; and that, if three wards and six seats were then won, their numbers in the Town Council, when six aldermen went out, would be just equal to the voting strength of the Conservatives. The latter party included Councillor Mullineaux, who was out with his party in consequence of his repeated disobedience to the party whip, and his habitual skirmishes with Alderman James

Thompson. The Liberals were confident that old "Tom" would never vote for the re-appointment of Mr. Thompson and several other of his colleagues as Aldermen. In fact, it was said that there was an informal agreement of some of the principal Liberals with Mr. Mullineaux, that if he would vote for several Liberals to be Aldermen, the whole Liberal party in the Council would vote for him; and in this way the Liberals thought they saw success within their grasp.

However, it was not to be. The Liberals failed to secure majorities in two wards—St. Mary's and Trinity, where the race was neck-and-neck, and only carried four seats out of the necessary six. Even then it was just possible that a tie might occur in the election of aldermen, with the assistance of Councillor Mullineaux, and at the Council meeting on the 9th of November, 1868, the anxiety of both sides was great. But the fate of parties in the impending parliamentary struggle was involved, and Mr. Mullineaux could not bring himself to do anything toward defeating his old friend, Mr. Hornby, senior. The conflict in his breast between attachment to Mr. Hornby and pique against Mr. James Thompson must have been sharp; but loyalty to his friend prevailed. In the Council Chamber it was noticed that Mr. Hornby's son, Mr. E. K. Hornby, who had been elected a Councillor for Trinity Ward, seated himself beside Mr. Mullineaux, as if to be at hand to overcome, by mild persuasives, any demurs which might suggest themselves. Old "Tom's" face was flushed, as usual when he was labouring under mental excitement, and his set smile might either mean mischief to the dominant coterie or a placated disposition in regard to it. When the voting papers for the six Aldermen were examined, it was seen that Mr. Baynes (who was still considered half a Liberal, he having been

originally returned as a Councillor and made Mayor and Alderman by the Liberals) received 42 votes, the full number of the Council; Messrs. Hutchinson, Joseph Harrison, and Dickinson 25 votes; and Messrs. William Stones and James Thompson 22 votes; these six Conservatives were elected. Mr. Mullineaux and Mr. Robert Spencer had 20 votes; Mr. Beads, 19 votes; Mr. Thos. Pilkington, 15 votes; and Mr. Ward, 10 votes. Evidently Mr. Mullineaux had voted for four of the Conservative six, but had not voted for Mr. James Thompson and Mr. William Stones. He had also voted for Mr. Spencer, and for himself, and the nineteen Liberal councillors had all voted for Mr. Mullineaux, but no Conservatives, except himself. Subsequently to this crisis, in the affairs of both parties, the breach between "Tom" Mullineaux and his old political associates widened. He was as high-spirited as Mr. James Thompson, and neither of the twain made any movement towards conciliating the other. Throughout 1869 Mr. Mullineaux came out stronger than ever as a denouncer of "jobs," and the proceedings at the Council Meetings were one long confused squabble. Mr. Mullineaux did not make set speeches as a rule, but he rose as often as a sentence or two occurred to him that he might effectively interpolate, and no matter how often he had risen to put in remarks during a discussion, he was not to be repressed if he chose to speak again. His fragmentary strictures provoked others, until anything like orderly debate was out of the question. The local newspapers encouraged these indecorous disputations by reporting every word that was uttered.

At the June meeting of the Council, in 1869, Mr. Mullineaux started one of these irregular wrangles, on the subject of the Town Clerk's perquisites, producing a bill

for expenses incurred by that official in conducting an election, which included joiners' work at the polling places. A comical little scene was enacted betwixt Mr. Beck, the Town Clerk, and Mr. Mullineaux; and at the finish old "Tom" for once carried his motion by 18 votes to 15, leaving the Town Clerk in a rather awkward predicament. In July of that year "Tom" created a sensation by calling upon the Town Clerk to read the section of the Municipal Act which forbids insolvent members of a Town Council to act. This move was directed against some member inimical to Mr. Mullineaux, whose private affairs were in an unfortunate state. In August and September the bills were before the Council for certain expenses incurred by Mr. Smith, the Mayor, during the election disturbances of the preceding year, when military aid was invoked to quell the rioting. "Tom" was trenchant on the items of the Bull Hotel bill for soldiers' keep, and other tavern bills, and eating-house bills for police refreshments, including "2,866 pints of beer, and 282lbs. of beef for the police, in October, 1868." The beef, our butcher-councillor asserted, was so lavishly supplied to the constables that they were obliged to hawk it about to get rid of it. Mr. Smith who, as Mayor, had not been too particular in his outlay, took "Tom's" exposures as personal, and the dispute in that instance resolved itself into a round at verbal boxing between the pestering Councillor and the rough-tongued Mayor.

Three years of "Tom" Mullineaux' peculiarly aggravating and harassing attacks had proved too much for the patience and toleration of the Conservative chiefs, and, when his term of office had expired, at the end of October, 1869, they made up their minds to discard him as a recognized

representative of the party, and, if possible, to exclude him from the Council. The Conservative Ward Committee in St. Mary's Ward adopted as their candidates Mr. Edwin Eastwood and Mr. Henry Polding. (Mr. Polding was the other retiring Councillor.) Mr. Mullineaux resolved to stand as an independent candidate. Naturally the Liberals in the Ward made the most of Mr. Mullineaux. They decided to support him and to work his election, and brought out no other candidate. But all the Burgesses who were Conservatives would not turn against old "Tom." The butchers, as a body, looked upon him as their spokesman in the Council, and continued to back him. In the stiff contest which took place, Mr. Mullineaux was enabled to hold the seat. The polling resulted, for Eastwood, 242 votes; for Mullineaux, 232; for Polding, 222. Mr. Eastwood had thrown Mr. Polding, and not Mr. Mullineaux. The report of the election states that, when the poll had been declared, "as Mr. Mullineaux left the polling-booth he was seized upon by his admirers, and carried shoulder high to a neighbouring public-house," where, it may be imagined, the triumphant independent Councillor was duly glorified and toasted, and thanked and treated his backers.

I cannot follow the course of Mr. Mullineaux during the ensuing three years that he remained in the Town Council. Like other men who have assisted in Corporate administration, he, after a time, lost his zest for such engagements. When he consented to take a more responsible part in some departments, he made the discovery that the best of men may commit mistakes for critics to fasten upon. One unforgotten incident in which Mr. Mullineaux himself was the victim illustrates this remark. Being esteemed an experienced and good judge of animals, he was commissioned

occasionally to purchase horses for the Corporation. On the occasion, I refer to, old "Tom" had attended one of the Lancashire Horse Fairs, and had bought, for a big price, a horse which he believed to be sound and useful in every respect; but when the horse came to be tried, it betrayed inability to keep its track without being led, and on a closer inspection it turned out to be totally blind. This mishap was a godsend to those managing men of the Town Council whose transactions "Tom" Mullineaux had unsparingly held up as proofs of their incompetency, or worse. They rallied and roasted poor Thomas unmercifully. As long as he stayed in the Council, and in the town, he never heard the last of that blind horse. Vain was his reply, that the horse, but for that one defect, was a strong, well-shaped animal, and could draw a load with any horse, if its driver were at its head to guide it. The infallible "Tom" had been badly taken in as a horse-buyer, and his mouth was henceforth shut for the denunciation of the failings of other men. And "Tom" Mullineaux resembled not a few personages most addicted to ridiculing their fellows in this, that he could not so well see where the laugh came in when it was turned against himself.

In his latter years, having retired from public life, Mr. Mullineaux removed from Blackburn to the township of Leyland, and there amid rural scenes he resided until his death. He died at Holme House, Leyland, very suddenly, in his 72nd year, June 29th, 1882. He was twice married, and left sons, Joseph, Thomas, and William Henry, and daughters Elizabeth and Mary.

"Jack" Smith, Quarry-Master and Mayor.

XIII.—"JACK" SMITH, QUARRY-MASTER AND MAYOR.

PROBABLY no other former townsman, included in the list of those characters I have undertaken to sketch, was so conspicuous and universally talked-about a man as "Jack" Smith, Quarry Master and sometime Mayor, was, for two or three years of his life. If a man wants to be noted, or notorious, he must not attempt to shed the skin of his peculiarities. There is too much rubbing of knots and angles off the cultivated men and women of the day, until there is little left to distinguish one from another. In "Jack" Smith all the natural protuberances and excrescences were preserved. He had never undergone the polishing process. He was a big stone hewn from the quarry, but unsquared and undressed. A rather short, thick-set man; clumsily built, but hardy and powerful; horny-handed; thick-necked, with a hard, round head, thatched with stiff light brown hair, short-cropped; a plain rugged face; gray eyes; nose dinted. A frame in which rude vigour was expressed; animated by a plucky, stubborn spirit. A voice loud and gruff; gestures uncouth; and an in-bred roughness of manner which all his contact with gentlemen during the two years of his service of the office of Mayor had not the smallest mitigating effect upon. Such

was "Jack" Smith when he became a public man in Blackburn, and such he remained to the end of the chapter.

"Jack" Smith was a Blackburn man bred, whose place of nativity was attested by his manners, his speech, and everything about him. He was born in the year 1826, somewhere, I believe, in that western corner of the old town named "Snig Brook," from the small stream which ran through it. One who was well acquainted with "Jack" as a lad, used to speak of him as an old "Snig-brooker." His family was humble, and I have nothing to mention about his father and mother. He was of that most numerous tribe of Smiths to be found all over England, and perhaps no man who ever bore the common name of "John Smith" possessed a personality more suited to it than our "Jack." His years of playtime and schooling (if he went to school at all) were short. Acknowledging the toast of his health, at a dinner given to his workmen in December, 1867, to celebrate his election to be Mayor of Blackburn, Mr. John Smith told the company that he had had a hard up-bringing, and began to work his own way when very young, for, at the age of seven he was employed in a cotton factory, "breaking cans off," at 4s. 2d a week, and at ten years old he was earning 5s. 3d. weekly at "brushing down" in the mill. A muscular, brawny-limbed lad like "Jack" was not cut out for indoor factory-labour, and, when he grew a few years older, he left it, and went as apprentice to Mr. Lawrence Hacking, father of Richard Hacking. "Jack" Smith liked to talk of his old "gaffers," "Lol" and "Dicky." I think he must have learned to be a stone-mason and a quarry-man with the Hackings, who carried on both trades. A member of his family informs me that, about the beginning of his apprenticeship, and at the age of

fourteen, he had an accident which was nearly fatal. He fell from a mill, four or five storeys high, and sustained injuries which considerably altered his features; his nose was then broken, and he carried other marks of his injuries as long as he lived. He was carried home on a stretcher, and was even thought to be dead, for some minutes.

John Smith could not have been long out of his apprenticeship when he took one of the stone-quarries which Lawrence and Richard Hacking had previously worked, and there started for himself as a quarry-master. That was the delph near the top of Revidge, on the east side of the old lane called "Duke's Brow," at "Wagtail." Smith also worked as a mason, and took small building jobs, for which he used stone from his delph. The late Mr. James Whittaker, master-mason and contractor, went to work for "Jack Smith" about 1847, and served his apprenticeship with him. Subsequently Mr. Smith took the stone-quarry known as "Fox Delph," at the rear of "Bank House," and there he for many years quarried stone until the delph could be no longer worked, and was closed.

The "Wagtail Delph" and "Fox Delph" were both situate upon the estate of Lady Whitehead, and "Jack" Smith, as tenant, was brought into connection with the owner of the estate, and eventually was engaged as her agent. This was a good chance for him, if he had only known how to take the fullest advantage of it. The whole freehold of 84 statute acres was rapidly coming into the market as building land, upon the side of the town most fancied for the better class of houses. The owner was non-resident, and the heir, her son, was a spendthrift. So that the agent had only to look well after the estate and bide his time, to find a valuable property pass into his

own possession. Indeed, that was what actually occurred. Lady Whitehead died in 1869. The son, Colonel Whitehead, parted with his inheritance, piece-meal, as money was needed to enable him to continue his career of prodigality, and John Smith had the first chance of buying the portions disposed of, on easy terms. But, unfortunately for him, he had not the head for the management of an estate, nor for prudent financing of the business; and he laid out the estate, too, in a hap-hazard and disadvantageous way. Thus, instead of making a comfortable thing for himself out of the land, he muddled its management, and his affairs generally, until at the end of a few years he fell into hopeless difficulties, and became insolvent. But I am anticipating.

In 1860 "Jack" Smith had so far progressed, by prosecuting his trades of builder and quarry-master, that he was able to buy, from Lady Whitehead, Bank House, the ancient yeoman's messuage upon the estate; and in that house he took up his abode, and continued to reside there until circumstances compelled him to quit it.

It is a mistake to suppose that uneducated men of rough exterior are more destitute of social ambition than other men of equally undistinguished origin, who are educated. The difference is rather the other way—that the former type of man is often seen to push himself into notice and position of some local authority by dint of natural energy unchecked by reserve, whilst the latter type lags in the race for front place, in the provincial community to which he belongs. "Jack" Smith was not kept back by any constitutional bashfulness accompanying his rude strength. He began to "thrutch" by the time he felt he had got a tolerably firm footing as quarry-master, and to aspire to share in governing the town. He would be aged about thirty-two years when

he first came forward as a candidate for the office of Town Councillor. He commenced public life as a Radical. As such he appeared in the field at a Municipal Election for the ward in which he had spent his early years, and still lived in at the time—the Ward of St. Paul's. It had acquired the name of the Radical "Gibraltar." "Jack" Smith, from first to last, clung to the "Rock," though in his final candidature in St. Paul's Ward he stood as a non-party man. At first he was the accepted defender of the "Rock" for the Radicals. He was elected one of the Councillors for that Ward in 1858. After a while he found a topic to harp upon in the Council that suited his ideas. A rumour was just then being circulated that certain members of the Town Council had stocked their gardens with flowering plants or shrubs from the Corporation Park, to which they were helped by the Park gardeners, for a consideration. In his blattering style, Smith brought up, publicly in the Council meeting, this accusation, demanding to know what had become of "them Tom Thumbs," and "them other plants" which somebody had stolen from the Park. "Jack's" thundering denunciations of the mean men who would rob the burgesses by rifling, of its choice flowers, their new Park (it was but lately opened) excited some amusement. It gained him, for the time, the reputation of a stern purist in town's business, which I am afraid he, a few years later, entirely lost. This was the occasion on which "Jack" Smith first figured conspicuously in the Municipal arena, and the exhibition which he made of himself is characteristic of his habit of floundering in personal imputation when he wanted to impress the burgesses with the idea of his weight in town's business.

It was, I find, towards the end of October, 1861, when

"Jack" Smith had served three years in the Town Council, and was soliciting a renewal of the confidence of the burgesses of St. Paul's Ward, that he launched the charges which at the time caused a great hubbub in the Council, and were long afterwards the subject of derisive allusion in the borough. John Smith was out as a "Radical" (his own name for parties was generally "Radicals" and "Tories," not "Liberals" and "Conservatives"), with the late Mr. Frank Johnston for his colleague; and they were being opposed in St. Paul's Ward by Messrs. James Dickinson and J. B. S. Sturdy. Money was freely expended on both sides in the election. Mr. Frank Johnston, in 1869, before a Parliamentary Committee, mentioned that this particular ward contest, in 1861, cost him and Mr. Smith £300. What the attacking party spent was not announced, but Mr. James Dickinson and Mr. Sturdy were not the men to be left far behind in the competition for votes on the "puchase system." The Radicals won the election with about 500 votes a-piece, and a majority of a hundred or so. Only some 900 votes were polled, and, if the cost to each side was £300, the £600 spent averaged over thirteen shillings a vote.

At a ward meeting held at the "Vulcan" tavern, addressed by the candidates, "Jack" Smith went in for exposing the rottenness which he professed to have discovered in the Corporation. He singled out the management of the new Park as especially scandalous. The head gardener, Peter McGregor, according to "Jack," was habitually drunk, yet, he added, "he (Smith) could not get him bagged. Why? Because plenty of Aldermen and Councillors near the Park got plenty of plants; £12 worth of such plants would be found in gentlemen's gardens near the Park. They had

been gradely well robbed in their Park." With more in the same style, "Jack" seeing that his hearers were tickled by his insinuations. In the town, for the next few days, "Jack's" sayings at the "Vulcan" were the talk of every bar-parlour, tap-room, and workshop; and people were "spotting" the gentlemen whom "Jack" was hitting at—whose villas stood beside the Park, and into whose gardens and grounds the plants from the park were said to have found their way.

The accusations were taken up with exceeding warmth at the next Council Meeting, and Councillor Smith was called upon to prove his charges. "Jack" failed to comply with that reasonable requisition. At "fending and proving" he did not shine. The Council, after reiterated invitation, got nothing out of him but an ambiguous assertion that "Aldermen and Councillors had got Tom Thumbs from Peter McGregor, and he could find the gardener who could tell him where the plants were—plants which had gone out of the Park." This was met with cries of "Name!" but "Jack" would give no names. Aldermen and Councillors who had houses and gardens near the Park, rose, one after another, and, for themselves, indignantly repelled the charge. Councillor Pickop moved an amendment, on the minutes of the Parks Committee, which laid upon Councillor Smith the obligation to establish his charge, or to withdraw it, and amounted to censure if he refused. The Council resolved that "Jack" should not be placed upon a single Committee until he proved or retracted. With two or three exceptions, the members of "Jack's" own party left him to stand by himself in the pillory of public disdain, and the Conservatives, who had just become a majority in the Town Council, united in severe condemnation of his conduct. Next month the matter cropped up again. "Jack" Smith

had armed himself with a long written statement, which he was not allowed to read; he handed it to the reporters to be printed in the newspapers; and Alderman Boyle and Councillor Stones produced statements from several of the Park workmen, whom they had questioned as to the existence of any grounds for "Jack's" charges "Jack's" manuscript was a sorry specimen of subterfuge. His damning indictment of "plenty of Aldermen and Councillors" having robbed the Park systematically of great quantities of plants, worth scores of pounds, resolved itself into a paltry matter of a barrowful or two of common plants having been given away to two or three nobodies outside the Council. "Jack" put his attenuated complaints in form of questions such as these:—"Had not John Morrison carried away one or two hampers of plants from the Park and paid McGregor in celery? "Had not Clarkson, a Park labourer, told you that he took a wheelbarrowful of Tom Thumbs and other plants to Slater's Bell Vue Gardens, and brought back in return a quantity of Sweet Williams?" "What has become of the quantity of Sweet-Williams given by Joseph Parker three years ago?"

The contrast is somewhat striking betwixt "Jack" Smith "in Coventry" at the Town Council, after the above piece of tom-foolery in 1861, and "Jack" Smith six or seven years subsequently, in 1868-1869, installed during two years as Mayor of the Borough, the elect of the Conservative party whose resentment he had provoked at the earlier date. But he was intrinsically unchanged in his peculiarities—when honoured as when dishonoured—the same devious sort of a man.

"Jack" Smith was again elected a Councillor in 1864, and his promotion to the bench of Aldermen followed a while

after. Even when he acted with and for the Conservatives, "Jack" owned that he was indebted to the Radicals for his position in the Town Council. Although he probably never heard the name, or knew what it signified, "Jack" Smith might be described as an "Opportunist" in local politics. Distinct political convictions, or strong, steady party preferences or sympathies, I doubt if John Smith, in all his life as a public character, was capable or conscious of.

"Jack" Smith was elected Mayor of Blackburn in November, 1867. The town has never, before or since, had for Mayor a man so utterly a stranger to all the graces of refined society and the rules of politeness, or to the dignity of mien people look for in the first citizen, for the time being, of a great town. It would seem that no more eligible townsman was at that time prepared to accept the honour. Alderman Baynes, when proposing Mr. John Smith for Mayor, compared him to Curtius, who, in the legendary period of ancient Rome, leapt into the gulf that yawned in the Forum, and saved the city. "Jack" would not be likely to see the point of the classic reference of Mr. Baynes, but, if anyone had suggested, in native phrase, that he had landed himself in a "hoile," he would have understood and agreed. He was a rough chap, and (foreseen or not by those who picked him out) there was rough work for him to undertake and go through in his Mayoralty, such as a more sensitive man could not have performed. John Smith was not troubled with nerves or with qualms. His face, when set, was hard as flint—morally, I mean, as physically, its features were rocky.

On the Sunday morning after his election as Mayor, I recollect seeing the Worshipful "Jack" walking down Montague Street to attend service at St. Paul's Church.

He was attired in a black suit, the coat a "swallow-tail," with somewhat short tails, and a new "top hat," to which the head under it seemed strange and discomforted. Round the Mayor's neck was twined a thick white woollen comforter, the ends of it hanging down in front; and with his largest prayer-book under his arm, and his side-swaying, lumbering walk, honest "Jack" looked one of the queerest samples of a Mayor that had been seen in these parts. Mr. Smith had declined to follow custom by proceeding in state, at the head of a civic procession, to the Parish Church on the Sunday after his appointment; a decision which gave umbrage to his Church friends, but delighted some of the Dissenters. At James Street Chapel the minister on that morning offered up a short special prayer, or thanksgiving, and this was the gist of it:—"Oh, Lord, we give thee humble and hearty thanks that the Chief of this borough has not begun his year of office to-day by that awful profanation of the Sabbath which our eyes have so often been forced to see," etc. But Mayor Smith's severe purism on Sabbath sanctity must have been evanescent, for, on Sunday, the 9th of February following, he did march in State to the Parish Church, to the satisfaction of sundry good people, but for which he was reproached by others who had extolled his previous contrary determination.

A story may be repeated, which I had from "Jack" Smith himself at the time, as exemplifying his unsophisticated manners and deportment when he went "abroad" during his Mayoralty, and represented this Corporation at functions in other places. He was invited to be present at a public ceremony and banquet at Barrow-in-Furness, sometime during his first year of office. "Jack" described how he took with him the Mayor's robes wrapped in a bundle,

and, for fear of having them stolen, as had almost happened on another journey, he carried the parcel himself from the railway station, at the other end, to the Town Hall. At the banquet, he related, "Aw wer set beside a mon as aw wer towd wer Lord summat-or-other – aw've forgetten his name. Whol wey wer eytin' this lord kept on tawkin', but aw dudn't know whod to say back to 'im. He tawked abeawt th' Abyssinia war. Whod dud aw know abeawt th' Abyssinia war? Soa aw sed 'Ay,' to heverything he sed, for a bit, an' then aw thowt id wer time to change, soa aw started o' sayin' 'Nowe.' Thad lord an' me drunk eawt o' th' same bottles o' wine, an' aw drunk as oft as he drunk. Eh! lad; aw con sup beer wi' onybody; but aw soon fun eawt aw cudn't sup wine wi' a lord."

The question of how to get rid of its sewage was troubling Blackburn when John Smith became Mayor, and it was a subject to his liking, and one he reckoned to have studied. He referred to it in his first speech from the chair of the Town Council, and suggested that the Corporation should lose no time in carrying out a bold scheme of sewage irrigation. They should convey the contents of the sewage to Longton, or somewhere about there, and cultivate the marsh land with it. "Jack's" science on that question was formulated in the sentence, "Muck mun go to th' land," which he propounded with an air of sagacity as if it were quite a new discovery of his One might speak of him as an enthusiast on sewage. In an article in the *Blackburn Times*, written by myself, on the conclusion of Mr. Smith's second year of office as Mayor, this passage occurs: "In pursuit of his darling project of sewage irrigation, Mr. Smith has penetrated every thicket and explored every gully and ravine in the neighbourhood of Blackburn, and has visited

towns without number, and surveyed no small portion of the United Kingdom. At his house in Duke's Brow we are told that Alderman Smith has a small museum of a novel kind. The collection consists of ranges of well-stopped bottles, containing sewage liquid (brought from all parts by Mr. Smith), in all stages of composition and decomposition, odorized, deodorized, polluted, diluted, precipitated, and we know not what varieties of decoction." It was added that "Jack" Smith, carried away by the true scientist's eagerness of investigation, did not hesitate to test, by tasting these precious waters, and considered them not so nauseous as those from the sulphur wells drunk freely by visitors in search of health at Harrogate.

The position of Mayor of Blackburn was no bed of roses during the prolonged and savage warfare of parties which extended over the greater part of the year 1868, and led up to the desperate contests of the Municipal and Parliamentary Elections in November of that year. "Jack" Smith, as Mayor, no doubt did his best to cope with the difficulties, to prevent the factions of Irish Roman Catholics and Orangemen (whose old enmities and fanaticisms blazed up as they were fed by the combustibles piled upon them by the anti-Romanist lecturer, Mr. Murphy) from devouring each other; and to keep the native Tory and Radical partizans within bounds, engaged, as they were, in a set trial of party strength and resource, after the franchise had been extended to the great body of the working-men. Towards the Mayor, the Conservatives were observant and exacting, the Liberals just as sharply watchful and also suspicious, fearing they were not going to have fair play. "Jack," indeed, could not do as he liked. He did not really control matters, though he was Mayor. His master was

Alderman James Thompson, and, in that instance, "Jack was *not* as good as his master." I think now (one can regard things coolly when 26 years have passed since) that "Jack" Smith in the main acted impartially in that time when almost every man, actively enlisted on either side, was carried away by party spirit fanned to white heat. He had this in his favour, that, as I have previously said, at bottom he was neither Radical nor Tory. He didn't know what he was politically, but he knew who he was beholden to personally, and he stood at one side, once or twice, and let his functions be performed by someone else mightier than he. But he could not stand to be pressed too hard, or, like a chased hare, he doubled. "Jack's" conversation was commixed with the old native sayings. One of them was, "There's nowt so queear as fooak." He found that to be so during his Mayoralty, more than ever before, and, amongst the queerest folk, there were few more queer than "Jack" himself.

An element of the comic appeared in "Jack" Smith's performances, mingled with the tragic, even when the affair was most serious. Just before the Municipal Elections of 1868, each party had its hired bands of fighting men posted over the Borough to keep the other party in order. The Radical watch-dogs claimed to have discovered that the Tories were occupying in force the upper rooms of St. Paul's School, the lower rooms of which were to be used as the polling-booth, the night before the Municipal Election. It was reported at head-quarters, and messengers were sent off to find the Mayor, and to demand that he should come out and dislodge that Tory garrison. It was either on that, or some other similar requisition upon the Mayor, that the incident I am going to relate was said to have taken place.

I believe something like it did actually occur. The Mayor was found, perhaps, at the Town Hall. During the Fenian scare at the end of 1867, Mr. Potts, the Chief Constable, had got leave to purchase a number of swords wherewith to arm himself, and a portion of his officers, in the event of a local Fenian raid upon the Police Office and Town Hall. When the Mayor, "Jack" Smith, was fetched by the Radicals to deal with some Tory delinquents, he armed himself with one of these swords from the Police Armoury, and set off on foot through the streets to the place where he was wanted. Fortunately it was after dark, so that not many of the lieges were affrighted by seeing the Mayor stalking along, sword in hand, like "Macbeth" or "King Richard" in the play, prepared to slay the adversary. Arrived at the spot, "Jack" summoned the Tory garrison to surrender, shouting, "*Come eawt o' theear! Come eawt, or aw'll stick yo'.*" The detachment came downstairs, and, seeing at the door that doughty warrior-Mayor, with his gleaming sword pointed towards them, rushed past the dreadful figure and made off as fast as their legs could carry them.

An incident of the fighting in St. Mary's Ward, connected with "Jack" Smith, was reported in the local papers: – "As the Mayor and Town Clerk were crossing the street towards the Old Bull Hotel, a rush was made at them by a number of drunken and infuriated men, armed with hammers and and other murderous weapons, one man having the audacity to seize his Worship. The Mayor's strong right arm proved too much for the fellow, but, at this instant, the police came up and protected the Mayor from further assault. He and the Town Clerk entered the Old Bull by the side gates, which were instantly closed to bar out the furious crowd."

Anticipating the possibility of renewed rioting on the nomination-day and the polling-day of the Parliamentary Election, Mayor Smith had procured from the military authorities at Preston an order for a troop of cavalry to be despatched to Blackburn on the morning of the day of nomination, to be in readiness to assist in quelling disorder should need arise. The public nomination was a formality which might have been designed to offer occasion to an excited population for breaking the peace In Blackburn, on Monday, November 16th, 1868, two immense bodies of people, comprising the bulk of the adult inhabitants of the Borough, male and female, were mustered, by processions converging upon the spot, from all quarters of the constituency, upon an open space of ground off Canterbury Street. They were divided into two nearly equal crowds, roundly computed to number 20,000 or 25,000 in each, separated by a partition of boards, which cut the ground into halves. The crowd to the left, as seen from the hustings, were the supporters of Mr. Hornby and Mr. Joseph Feilden, the Conservative candidates and former Members; and the crowd to the right were the supporters of Mr. Potter and Mr. Montague Feilden, the Liberal candidates. The hustings were similarly divided, and each division was packed as close as people could stand with the more prominent and active politicians and townsmen of each party. The hustings might hold 1,000 persons, with the candidates and their leading friends in front; and the Mayor and Town Clerk in the middle. The ground covered by the huge assemblage of people had been used for the deposit of cinders from the boiler flues of adjacent mills, and was strewn with "clinkers" which might be used as missiles. Just as the proceedings were commencing,

some lads picked up "clinkers" and threw them over the partition into the opposite crowd; and immediately the battle became general, with these hard, rugged "clinkers" for projectiles, between the men and lads in each of the hostile masses, the females retreating to the further sides of the enclosure. Presently some of the throwers turned their fire upon the occupants of the hustings, who could not move out of range, but were compelled to stand defenceless and take their chance of being hit. Several ugly face-wounds were inflicted, and the situation was decidedly disagreeable. The Mayor was looked to, to take steps to restore order and stop the clinker-throwing, either by a display of police-force or by summoning the military force near at hand. But the Mayor made no sign; whereupon Mr. James Johnston, as a Magistrate, took it upon himself to go to the Town Hall, or wherever the troop of cavalry was posted, and bring the soldiers upon the ground. He did not consult the Mayor or obtain his authority, but started off, and in a short time the cavalry rode up, when the combatant portion of the crowds desisted from all warfare, and enabled the nomination to proceed. I remember that Mr. Hornby, senior, the candidate, in his speech, took strong exception to the action of Mr. James Johnston in having, on the impulse of the moment, usurped the authority of the Mayor over the military that awaited the Mayor's orders; and on the Liberal side, the Mayor was taken to task for having hesitated to call up the cavalry. The soldiers were not required to act against the multitude; they merely showed themselves outside the enclosure, seated on their horses, with their sabres drawn, and peace was restored. I have referred to this incident of the nomination as one in which "Jack" Smith as Mayor was primarily concerned.

One of the most dangerous and sudden collisions of the party mobs occurred in Penny Street, after the result of the Borough election, in the return of Messrs. Hornby and Feilden, was known. The Brookhouse lads started off home in a mass from the Market Square flourishing their colours, carrying a live game-cock, and shouting their triumph. Their way lay up Penny Street, the Irish quarter. The Irishmen could not endure this parade of the wearers of the Orange-and-Blue through what they regarded as their own particular roost, and they turned out in great numbers and attacked the Brookhouse contingent. The fray was rapidly assuming the dimensions of a great riot when the Mayor came upon the scene, and by his vigorous intervention, and threat to fetch the soldiers to charge the mob, he in a few minutes succeeded in separating and dispersing the combatants. It was this fight to which "Jack" Smith referred in his remarks, on giving up the Mayor's office, quoted further on.

When, in February, 1869, Justice Sir James Shaw Willes came to Blackburn to try the petition against the return of Messrs. Hornby and Feilden at the election in the November preceding, Mayor Smith attained the height of his grandeur and self-importance In order to be enabled to give her Majesty's Judge a proper reception, the Mayor was empowered to hire a state-carriage, drawn by a pair of spanking horses, with a coachman to match. "Jack" kept no conveyance of his own, excepting stone-carts, and, till then, had never been seen (in Blackburn at any rate) ensconced in a more pretentious vehicle than a cab. The crowd stared to see him seated beside the Judge within that aristocratic-looking equipage. Mr. Smith gave up his residence, Bank House, wholly to Justice Willes during his stay;

it is a very moderate-sized house, and could hardly lodge the Judge, his cook, butler, and footman, and the housemaids. After sitting on the bench at the Town Hall, presiding over the enquiry, for a number of hours on each day, the Judge spent his evenings alone, reading and considering the evidence which he had heard; and one may suppose that his personal intercourse with Mr. Smith, his nominal host, was not much. Such brief conversations as the tall, slender, pale, gray-haired, and courtly Justice Willes held with the short, brown-skinned, ungainly John Smith, Mayor of Blackburn, must have given the former a curious and quite mistaken conception of the measure of civilization and refinement reached by, and looked for in, the Civic Fathers of a great Lancashire town; while from the leaders of both political parties in the town, the Election Judge, whilst here, kept himself strictly aloof.

On the morning of the opening of the Court for trial of the Petition, the large police-court was thronged with counsel, solicitors, witnesses, and active politicians interested in the trial on one side or the other. The Mayor, "Jack" Smith, took his seat on the bench by the side of Justice Willes, who found the air of the court rather too close for him. He was seen to say a few words in an undertone to the Mayor, who nodded assent, and rising, shouted in his heavy voice, pointing to the windows at the side of the court:—"*Heigh, policemon, hoppen them winders, an' led sum hair in.*" As he reseated himself "Jack" added, chidingly, addressing the group of constables in attendance:—"*Do summat for yor brass.*" The audience had all worn solemn countenances—for it was a serious business which was opening—until the voice of the Mayor sounded through the court in the issue of these orders; but few could

restrain a laugh at the quaint idiom of the Right Worshipful, and even the Judge's severe features for a moment relaxed into half a smile.

After the trial, which resulted in the adjudgment of the election to be void, the Judge left Blackburn more quietly than he had been permitted to enter the town, and popular report ran that "Jack" Smith had turned his back upon the Judge as soon as he had given his judgment, and would not see him off at the railway station on his departure. Of course it was not so; but "Jack's" state-coach was sent back by rail whence it had come, and Bank House resumed its wonted homely internal aspect. But ere the flunkeys who had waited on the Judge took their flight, the story went, that exploring "Jack's" cellars, they had mistaken his bottles of sewage samples for wine bottles, and only on drawing the corks of one or more of them had disgustfully discovered their mistake.

The Election Petition and Bye-Election past, the remainder of the second year of "Jack" Smith's Mayoralty transpired in comparative peace. Only the Council was exercised, on the presentation of the bills for the daily junketings of the Mayor, Town Clerk, Chief Constable, Borough Surveyor, and other Corporate functionaries, in the autumn preceding; and "Jack" and his henchman, the Town Clerk, had several "bad quarters of an hour" at the Council Meetings. Jointly they had run up a score at the Old Bull, to the amount of £178 for luncheons, dinners, breakfasts, wines and spirits, consumed by themselves and others at the time of the Municipal and Parliamentary Elections in November, 1868. When assailed for these profuse entertainments, "Jack" Smith betrayed no compunction, and was proof against criticism. In 1861, in the

costly arbitration in Eccles *v.* the Corporation, "Jack" Smith, though a Councillor, sent in a bill for about £300 for his services on the side of the Corporation. He did not get all he claimed, in that instance, but he pocketed good round sums. As Mayor, he had not the means to defray the charges for his extravagances of the table, in which he was stimulated by the epicurean tastes of his Town Clerk, so he saddled them upon the Borough Fund. It was a time of general debauch in connection with Municipal affairs and party politics in Blackburn, and the discharge of the Mayor's dinner bills elicited no great amount of public remonstrance. Many stories were told of how the Mayor and Corporate officials "carried on" in London on their frequent visits on town's business. The hotel-bills they ran up were said to be of a prodigal character. One day the Mayor and Town Clerk drove to Greenwich, and lunched at the "Ship." "Jack" (the Mayor) was hungry at mid-day, and he fed heartily. Having made, in American phrase, a "good square meal," the Mayor and his official comrade drove back to London. On the way, the Town Clerk, addressing the Worshipful, asked: "Mr. Mayor, where shall we dine?" "Whad?" said the Mayor, "aw thowt we hed dined." "Oh, no," said the legal adviser. "Whay, what were yon we hed at Greenwich—worn't thad dinner enuff for ony mon?" demanded the Mayor. "My dear sir, that was only lunch; we dine at seven," said the Town Clerk. When the time for dinner arrived, "Jack" and his provident companion were ready again.

On his surrender of the office of Mayor, in November, 1869, "Jack" Smith, returning thanks to the Council's vote acknowledging his services, said that in the middle of his term "they had twelve months of continuous Radical

and Tory demonstrations, and the town for the whole twelve months was at boiling heat." "In all the times of these turmoils, when the Riot Act had to be read, and stones were flying all around, he warned the men to keep off knives. He should never forget the affair in Penny Street. He blamed the people who tried to enter Brookhouse with game cocks and colours, for that disturbance. He had come to the conclusion that if they did not pass on he would *shoot them every one.* He would have ordered the soldiers to go into them with powder and bullets too. In ten minutes he would have cleared the streets, and they would have been all shot like *rapputs.*" "Jack" Smith occasionally spoke, in this ruthless style, of shooting or "sticking" folks, as if they were so many rabbits or sheep, like a Napoleon or a Czar Nicholas, but he would not have been hard if it had come to the stern necessity.

I always thought that "Jack" Smith's redeeming trait was his stout, unflinching courage in face of an armed howling mob, or when interposing between two such mobs. Only a Mayor of Smith's hard physique could have risked himself as he often did. Happily he never got much hurt. On the occurrence of rioting, mischief sometimes results from the Mayor and Magistrates failing to act boldly at the beginning of disturbance. The writer of this sketch, who, in the exciting times of 1868 and 1869 was compelled to oppose and condemn some of Mr. Smith's acts, bore testimony to his unfailing energy and pluck in an emergency, when reviewing his Mayoralty in November, 1869, as follows: — "The time demanded a man of iron; and Alderman Smith found the advantage of his austere training and robust fibre in those days of tumult. It is only justice to recall the imperturbable and cheery courage with which

he went into the most disturbed districts of the town, and, in vindication of the law and of constituted authority, braved the bludgeons and the brickbats of fighting factions."

Twenty-two years passed from the close of John Smith's second year as Mayor until his death over two years ago. They were years of misfortune and reverse for him. Loss succeeded loss and failure followed failure. He was "Jack of many trades," and eventually none of them was worth a subsistence to him. He was a master mason and builder, but made little out of that beyond building a few houses and rows of cottages for himself. He was, for a while, partner with his relatives, Kenyon Brothers, in a Cotton Mill at Hole House, but that did not answer. He was many years a quarrymaster, but that occupation failed him when the two delphs were worked out and closed. Subsequently he had a share in a small brewery, but even the manufacture of beer did not set "Jack" on his feet. He was first agent and subsequently purchaser and owner of a valuable freehold estate of land, on the best side of the town, but that estate was mortgaged heavily, and when he fell insolvent, his interest in it became worthless. His struggle to carry on led to queer transactions and involved him in deeper difficulties. At last he was reduced. To an old friend who went to see him in his trouble, John Smith said, in quaint vernacular phrase:—"Eh! Mestur Brierla', they hev peighlt my yed!" For some months, before his end, his faculties failed him. He died in Burlington Street, at the age of 65, on the 26th of January, 1892. "Jack Smith's Lamp," at Sudell Cross, remains as a standing memorial of the chequered two years of his Mayoralty.

XIV.—"JEMMY" CUNNINGHAM, BUTLER, BREWER, AND MAYOR.

A JOLLY, sociable, sport-loving man, in the days of his middle-age and of his good fortune, was James (or "Jemmy" as his familiars and near neighbours used to call him) Cunningham, Mayor of Blackburn in the municipal year 1859-60. An oddity he certainly was not, and I do not introduce him as such, but as a townsman who was for a time conspicuous, and possessed characteristics which made him noticeable among a crowd. Mr. Cunningham was one of the tallest and portliest of the series of our Blackburn Mayors. He was also fresh-complexioned, of expansive countenance; fine eyes; large head, bald on the top; and of a breezy aspect generally, as if, when he entered a room, he had just been taking exercise in the open air. There was, too, an engaging simplicity about him. He did not look as if he were capable of taking anybody in, but whether, behind his air of bland ingenuousness, there lurked a shrewd Scotch caution which would have frustrated any attempt to get round him, was to be tested in order to be known.

"Jemmy" Cunningham came out of the "North Countree"; but from what part of it I never heard. The Cunninghams are a stock which have produced men of fame

in Scottish history, and I dare say the direct ancestry of my subject was creditable, if it were traced. He was born in 1796, or early in 1797. Whilst a young man, he had entered the service of William Feilden, Esq., of Feniscowles Hall, in the capacity of his butler. Feniscowles Hall has, for many years, been a place deserted by the family whose seat it was ; but the years from 1820 to 1850 were those of its greatest consequence, and, amongst the members of its domestic establishment, the butler, "Jemmy" Cunningham, by his stature and figure, no less than by his place, would be a large contributor to that consequence. He was then a bachelor, and such he remained, but in his manly prime the butler at Feniscowles may well have found admirers amongst the female members of the establishment, and of families in the neighbourhood. At the period to which I am referring, Feniscowles saw a good deal of company, for its master was member of Parliament for Blackburn, and a wealthy merchant and cotton spinner, as well as a land-owner ; and the house was visited by not a few personages of national reputation in the Conservative party, in the fifteen years, from 1832 to 1847, that Mr. William Feilden sat in the House of Commons. The hon. Member likewise kept a house in London during the session, in those years, and his butler, of course, would attend his master there as well as at Feniscowles. I have heard Mr. Cunningham speak of several of the celebrities whom he had seen at table when waiting upon Mr. (afterwards Sir William) Feilden. Sir Robert Peel, the statesman, was a particular friend of the then senior Member for Blackburn, and it was on Sir Robert's recommendation that Mr. William Feilden was created a baronet.

Contemporary with "Jemmy" Cunningham, as butler at

Feniscowles, was a Mr. Price, who was head gardener there. A daughter of Mr. Price became the wife of Mr. James Brogden, as was stated in my character sketch of Mr. Brogden. Mr. Cunningham was on friendly terms with the Price family at Feniscowles, and his niece, in fact, learnt the business with Miss Price, who was for some years one of the principal milliners in the town. After Miss Price married Mr. Brogden, the intimacy was kept up, and extended to Mr. Brogden, who was much with Mr. Cunningham after he removed to Blackburn. The friendship lasted while the parties lived.

Sir William Feilden, Bart., died in May, 1850, but I learn that it was some fourteen years before that event that Mr. James Cunningham relinquished his position as butler to that family. He had been careful and thrifty, and was enabled to purchase the Snig Brook Brewery in Blackburn, and to embark in the profitable manufacture of beer. It was an old-established though, at that time, not a large brewery. Snig Brook Brewery had been built early in the century. In 1820 it was in the possession of Mr. William Clark. Subsequently it was taken by Mr. Joseph Fairbrother, who, at the same time, held the office of Parish Clerk of Blackburn. He employed, as "rider-out" to the brewery, John Astley, a decent religious man and a zealous Churchman, who had been a teacher in the old Sunday School at Bent Street from the beginning. At the Parish Church, when the failing voice or health of the Parish Clerk, Mr. Fairbrother, interfered with the performance of his "clerking" duty, John Astley often occupied the clerk's desk at Divine Service, and read the responses as his master's substitute. What an outcry would be raised if, in the present day, the office of Parish Clerk were filled by a wholesale

maker and seller of malt liquor, and if, to add to the enormity, he were accustomed to call in a brewer's traveller to act as his deputy! But a previous generation was evidently not so much moved, as the passing one, by any association of Churches with Breweries.

Mr. Cunningham, when he took over Snig Brook Brewery, had the advantage of his predecessor, Mr. Fairbrother, that he could bestow his undivided attention upon the brewing business, whereas the latter had to keep one eye ever fixed on the Parish Church, whilst the other watched that the brewery did not run away. By Mr. Cunningham the Snig Brook brewery was developed, and the trade in its products enlarged by the purchase of a number of public-houses. Within a few years the ex-butler was reported to be fairly rich, and he began to aspire to public offices and honours to the extent of offering himself as a candidate for the position of a Town Councillor. He had built, sometime between 1850 and 1855, the square, detached house, constructed of brick, faced with stucco, which stands between the brewery and Montague-street, fronting to the latter road, and separated from it by a railed garden and gates. His brewery and residence are situated in St. Paul's Ward, and it was as a representative of that Ward that Mr. James Cunningham entered the Town Council. His politics were not distinctly displayed. It was the Liberals who returned him as Councillor, and afterwards elected him as Alderman and Mayor. Yet, whilst he was butler at Feniscowles, we may take for granted that he passed for a Conservative, and at the close of his Mayoralty his tacit association with the Liberals closed. In after years he was a recognised Conservative.

Mr. Cunningham was ambitious enough to place himself

in the running for the office of Mayor by the time he had served two or three years as Councillor and as many as years as Alderman. It has not occurred for many years, in Blackburn, that two townsmen felt their "greatness a-ripening" so that simultaneously they coveted the Civic Chair; but that uncommon situation was created in November, 1858, when Mr. Cunningham and Mr. John Baynes were each ready to assume the office, and in a sense were rivals. Mr. Cunningham had been led to expect the offer, and he suspected that he had been cheated of it by a bit of underhand working by certain members of the Council, who did not want him to be Mayor. Mr. Tiplady recorded of that incident:—"1858. Nov. 9. Alderman Baynes appointed Mayor. Mr. Cunningham addressed the inhabitants on that appointment, showing his disappointment." Councillor Grime was the proposer and Councillor Clough the seconder of Mr. Cunningham. The question went to a vote; parties were divided; but Mr. Cunningham got only 14 votes to 19 for Mr. Baynes, who was elected. The occurrence set the tongues of the gossips a-wagging. Mr. Cunningham would have been wiser to have kept his own counsel and bided his time, but he was a man who could not help showing that he felt and resented anything he considered a slight. The coolness between him and Mr. Baynes was not soon dissipated.

Eligible persons for Mayor are none so abundant in Blackburn, that a suitable citizen, who wants to be one, and whose political colour harmonises with the prevalent hue of the Town Council for the time being, need have long to wait if he but lays himself out for the post. Mr. Cunningham's turn came at the end of twelve months. He was elected Mayor on the 9th of November, 1859, and on the

same day he was re-elected an Alderman. The six Aldermen chosen, on that occasion, were: Messrs. Cunningham, Rutherford, Turnbull, Sparrow, Wilding, and Hopwood. That was the last batch of Aldermen made by the Liberals ere they lost their majority in the Council.

Alderman Baynes, during his Mayoralty, had resuscitated the project of a Free Library, which had lain in abeyance since the Libraries Act was adopted by the burgesses, some years previously. Mr. Baynes gave a handsome donation to be expended in providing cases for the Specifications of Patents presented to the town; and, whilst he was Mayor, at his suggestion, a large room on the upper floor of the Town Hall had been set aside for the reception of the Patents, and furnished as a reference room. Councillor Thomas Clough was the first promoter of the Free Library, and he, being just then "across" with Alderman Baynes, moved the next Mayor, Mr. Cunningham, to take up the scheme and to secure for himself the chief credit of the foundation of the Free Library, by pushing it forward so that it could be publicly inaugurated during his Mayoralty. Mr. Cunningham, on his elevation, started a fund, for the purchase of books, with a donation of £150. The Council thereon nominated a Free Library Committee, who appointed the writer as Secretary and Librarian. Mr. James Pilkington, then Member for the borough, had forwarded a large quantity of blue books, which, I fear, have not been looked into from that day to this except to be catalogued by the Librarian. Mr. Cunningham's gift was expended chiefly in the purchase of books of reference, selected from the stock of Mr. Morland, a Manchester bookseller, who periodically visited Blackburn and brought with him a portion of his stock of books for book buyers to inspect.

The Town's meeting, to inaugurate the Free Library, was held on the 23rd of August, 1860. Mr. Cunningham, as Mayor, was in the chair, and the strangers who responded to the Committee's invitation to come and advocate the institution of a Free Library were: Lord Hartington, then Member for North Lancashire, which embraced Blackburn Hundred; Mr. James Heywood, the other county Member, and one of the earliest promoters of Free Libraries; and Sir James P. Kay-Shuttleworth, Bart. Mr. Pilkington, M.P., was one of the local speakers.

I remember a little incident, connected with that meeting, which may be related as an example of the almost child-like frankness of Mr. James Cunningham. Though he had become a man of substance and position, he was quite destitute of book-learning. Other men, similarly deficient, might, in his place, have tried to conceal their shortcoming in that regard, but "Jemmy" Cunningham did not care to pass off for the educated man he was not. Lord Hartington (now Duke of Devonshire) lodged with the Mayor, Mr. Cunningham, after the Town's Meeting. In the forenoon of the following day, the Mayor went to the Town Hall to show his distinguished guest the books bought by his gift. I was not aware of the intended visit, or should have been at the Library-rooms to receive the Mayor and Lord Hartington, but, having some things to attend to out of doors, I was not in when they came. In the Librarian's absence, the Town Hall keeper took the visitors up to the rooms. Mr. Cunningham pointed out to Lord Hartington the books which formed the nucleus of the future Library, but told his Lordship that he knew nothing whatever about books, and that, if Lord Hartington desired any information respecting those works, the Librarian being

out, he should inquire of the Town Hall keeper. Lord Hartington asked no questions of that functionary about the books; his lordship could see for himself what they were; but he must have been rather amused (though he was too polite to show it) by the instance of an important Municipality in which the Mayor referred to the Town Hall keeper as a man of erudition, compared with himself.

Again, in 1862, Mr. Cunningham had Lord Hartington for his guest, on that nobleman's visit to Blackburn to inquire into the condition of the operatives during the Cotton Famine.

Another story of "Jemmy" Cunningham's Mayoralty which reveals the artlessness of his nature, and afforded merriment to his neighbours, tells of a remark which he dropped whilst under examination as a witness in an arbitration, or in some inquiry, in which Blackburn Corporation was an interested party, held in London. Mr. Cunningham made occasion to take out of his fob his watch, a large old-fashioned one in a massive gold case; and, addressing the presiding dignitary, amid the titters of counsel and solicitors, and other persons present, said:—"This valuable gold watch of mine I generally leave behind me at home when I come up to London, for fear of having it taken from me by pickpockets." It was even stated that the Mayor of Blackburn's "valuable gold watch" was handed round for feigned admiring inspection by those impudent lawyers; but I can hardly think that "Jemmy" Cunnnigham, with all his unsophisticated simplicity, would fail to perceive the absurdity of permitting that.

The townsfolk, of thirty years ago, had been most accustomed to connect the name, and service in the Town Council, of James Cunningham, with his gift, to the Cor-

poration Park, of two black swans. He had let his intention, to present a pair of these uncommon fowl—a male and a female—to the town be made known; but there was difficulty in procuring them; and the local Pressmen of the period, whenever there was a dearth of "pars," fell back upon the promised, but still not forthcoming, "black swans" as a topic for a paragraph; until the words became a standing allusion, supposed to convey a humorous suggestion. However, though people might laugh and joke about the "black swans," Mr. Cunningham was as good as his word, and, at length, a couple of swans of the sable-plumaged variety were purchased and presented by him, and brought and launched upon the large lake in the Park. The pair settled comfortably in their quarters, and, for years, remained objects of of interest to visitors; and, when the old birds died, some of their young ones were preserved, and I suppose there have been two or three generations of them by now. "Jemmy" Cunningham was not a little vain of having introduced them to the Park, and, to one of the public-houses which he built, he attached the sign of "The Black Swans."

Whilst he was Mayor, Mr. Cunningham patronised especially the Oddfellows and the Volunteers. Some 1,200 of the Oddfellows, wearing the insignia of the order, accompanied the Mayor to the Parish Church, on a Sunday in May, 1860. The Volunteer movement was started, in Blackburn, in the year of Mr. Cunningham's Mayoralty, and two corps, of Rifles and Artillerymen, were formed in the town. Mr. Cunningham had promised to present the Artillery corps with a silver bugle, before he completed his year of office, and the presentation was made by his niece, Miss Cunningham, on the 24th of December, 1860, in front of the Town Hall. I well recollect that the day was the

coldest in that winter; the frost was intense, and the temperature exceptionally low; and that Mr. and Miss Cunningham kept the Volunteers and the spectators waiting a considerable time until everybody was chilled through.

Mr. Cunningham took little part in town's business after he was Mayor; but he was re-elected an Alderman in November, 1865, by the Conservatives, though he was also supported by the Liberals, and received the largest number of votes of any of the Aldermen elected. His term expired in 1871.

About the year 1872, Mr. Cunningham gave up his Blackburn residence, Springburn House, and afterwards lived at Lytham with his unmarried sister and niece. He had also a nephew, Mr. Henry Cunningham, who inherited the bulk of his uncle's wealth. About a year or two later Mr. Cunningham sold the Snig Brook Brewery, and its valuable public-house attachments, to the late Mr. Daniel Thwaites. He, at his death, left that property and business to his nephew, Mr. William Ward, who now possesses the Snig Brook Brewery and prosecutes the business.

All his life "Jemmy" Cunningham was an ardent sportsman. He was one of the noted coursers in the North of England. Within a few days of his death, one of his dogs won the Clifton Cup. His house was crowded with trophies of the hunt. He was extremely hospitable, and that disposition enables an old gentleman who has plenty of money to surround himself with social pleasures. More to be valued still, is health, which Mr. Cunningham enjoyed to an advanced age. He was a county magistrate. He died, in his 80th year, at Lytham, October 19th, 1876. His niece, Miss Elizabeth Cunningham, died in 1887, and she be-

queathed to the Blackburn Free Library and Museum, which Mr. Cunningham had a principal hand in founding, a full-length portrait, painted in oil, of Mr. Cunningham, represented in sporting dress, with dog and gun, which now hangs in the hall of the Free Library, and is a fairly good likeness of Mr. Cunningham at about the age of sixty; two illuminated addresses, presented to him on his removal from the town by Blackburn friends; a ram's head converted into a receptacle for snuff, with massive silver mountings; another ram's head; numerous pairs of antlers and horns; and a large collection of stuffed wild animals, rare birds, and various objects in natural history.

XV.—"CHARLIE" TIPLADY, PRINTER AND ALDERMAN.

READERS of these sketches, who have passed the age of forty, and have lived in Blackburn all or most of their lives, cannot fail to have a clear recollection of "Charlie" Tiplady, and of the bookseller's shop and printing-office, with the sign, "C. Tiplady," on the north side of Church-street, at the east end, near Salford Bridge. Few townsmen were better known, or kept themselves more prominently in public view, than Charles Tiplady, in the thirty years from 1840 to 1870. In almost every movement and institution in the town, during that period, he had some share or connection. The other contemporary letter-press printers were rather jealous of "Charlie" Tiplady's forwardness and fussiness in local affairs. They said it all meant printing jobs. Even so; Mr. Tiplady was not the only tradesman in Blackburn who had an eye to business in his activities outside his shop. But a citizen must have aptitude for public speaking, in order to establish himself as a public man, possessing influence in a community, and this kind of ability Charles Tiplady possessed and cultivated. Whilst rival tradesmen "hid their light under a bushel," "Charlie" set his candle in a candlestick and that in a

window, where it could illuminate the street as well as the house. Moreover, he was given to taking shares in railways, waterworks, gasworks, and such like undertakings, which entitled him to be a speaker at the shareholders' meetings, and thus, in time, he got to be appointed a director of one or two profitable local companies, and that connection, too, brought "grist" to his "mill" as a tradesman. Altogether, long-headed "Charlie" Tiplady was supposed to make a "nice thing" out of the printing he secured from local governing bodies, churches, companies, and institutions. But job-printing, at best, in a provincial town, is not a craft in which a master gets rapidly rich; and Mr. Tiplady, with all his plodding and persistent looking after business, never grew into a big capitalist.

Charles Tiplady was born in Blackburn, June 23rd, 1808. His father was Mr. Thomas Tiplady. His mother, before marriage, was Elizabeth Lomax, daughter of Mr. James Lomax, of Blackburn. Her only sister, Mary Lomax, married, in 1805, Mr. Thomas Ratcliffe, and was mother of the late Alderman John Ratcliffe, and of Mr. Thomas Ratcliffe, another estimable old townsman. Mrs. Tiplady and Mrs. Ratcliffe inherited from their father, James Lomax, property which had previously belonged to their grandfather, Mr. Samuel Lomax, of Blackburn. Their grandmother, old Mrs. Lomax, lived to a very advanced age. On May 15th, 1807 (the *Blackburn Mail* records) "died, aged 92 years, Mrs. Lomax, relict of the late Mr. Samuel Lomax, Clock and Watch Maker, of this town." She was born as far back as 1715; and she was great grandmother to my subject, Charles Tiplady. Charles had two elder brothers, one of them, James Lomax Tiplady, who died, in his 70th year, in February, 1870. I knew him well.

He was a mechanic, but was able to live without working in his old age. He was as strong a Radical as his brother Charles was a Tory. Another brother, William, was, until his death, senior partner with Charles in the printing and bookselling business. He died in April, 1844, leaving no son, but one daughter. The youngest brother was John Tiplady, who removed to Bury about 1840, and emigrated to America in 1869. Charles's sisters were, Mary, who died in 1837; Margaret, who died in 1869; and Ann (old Miss Tiplady).

As a boy, "Charlie" Tiplady got his schooling at the old National School, in Thunder Alley, one of the old-fashioned sort of elementary schools, where the instruction was extremely rudimentary. Yet, some lads, who turned out good tradesmen, were taught in that school. Charles Tiplady has mentioned that, in his 20th year, in February, 1828, he narrowly escaped a violent death, but has left no particulars of the occurrence. He was only in his 22nd year when he entered into partnership with his brother William, in 1830. The partnership lasted fourteen years, but, for several of the latter years, William Tiplady was incapacitated by illness; and whatever progress the business made was due to Charles, the younger brother.

Charles Tiplady's first wife was Mary Heaton, who died in 1837, and in 1839 he married, secondly, Mary Callis, daughter of Mr. William Callis, of Blackburn. He had a son Thomas by the first marriage, and several sons and daughters by the second. One son, Mr. Charles Lomax Tiplady, was one of seven persons killed in the railway collision at Blackburn Station on August 7th, 1881.

From a somewhat irregular journal or diary, or, more correctly, a record of local occurrences and private matters,

kept by Mr. Tiplady, I have previously extracted for publication a quantity of items which illustrate the history of this town. In 1840, incendiarism was believed to have been resorted to by certain malicious lads employed in the Blackburn cotton factories, and Mr. Tiplady wrote down on August 2nd, in that year:—"I took occasion to address the scholars (at St John's School) on the dreadful wickedness attempted by several children employed in Messrs. Turner's mill, in setting the mill purposely on fire. About two months ago Mr. Livesey's mill was totally destroyed, and strong suspicions attached to a person working therein, but no sufficient evidence could be adduced to criminate him."

Charles Tiplady joined the Oddfellows' Friendly Society when a very young man, and was, all his life, a zealous promoter of Oddfellowship. In 1866 he was presented by the Blackburn Oddfellows with a silver tea service, in acknowledgment of his services, for 16 years, as Treasurer for the Widow and Orphans' Fund, and, in responding, he related reminiscences of the early years of the Order in the town. One incident was this:—"His first recollection of Oddfellowship in Blackburn was in the year 1817, when he saw a procession representing the funeral of the Princess Charlotte. There was a very long procession of Oddfellows, dressed in all the paraphernalia of that time, and many of them looked most lugubrious. Four men, dressed in white surplices, carried a coffin, in which was a representation of the Princess. Taste has improved in the town since that ghastly-grotesque feature of a street-procession was conceived." Mr. Tiplady, on the same evening, said that he knew Blackburn when only six factory chimneys were to be seen in it. In 1866 he could count 120 tall chimneys.

Of the Philanthropic Burial Society, Charles Tiplady was one of the founders, and he was chairman at several of its earliest annual meetings. In 1847-48, the local Chartists tried to grab a portion of the funds of the Society, and to invest them in Feargus O'Connor's Land Scheme. Charles Tiplady withstood them courageously; he was temporarily defeated; but afterwards succeeded in saving the Society from that party. Mr. R. W. Smiles, editor of the Liberal paper, the *Blackburn Mercury*, assisted Mr. Tiplady in that conflict. The Chartists packed the quarterly meeting of the Burial Society, on March 21st, 1848, and Mr. Tiplady relates:—"I had to combat the arguments of several speakers, but was overpowered, and beaten by a great majority. I, of course, resigned my office as Vice-President of the Society." "I was hoarse for a week after the meeting, from heat and exertion." A newspaper report of the meeting mentions that "an attempt was made by one man to pull Mr. Tiplady off the seat, but he threatened the fellow with arrest, if he laid a finger on him." "A man named Walsh, with the grossest personality, charged Mr. Tiplady with robbing the Society in his printing accounts, and called on Mr. R. W. Smiles, bookseller, to state if that was not a fact. After Mr. Tiplady had emphatically denied the foul slander, Mr. Smiles got up, and, in a good-tempered and sensible address, pointed out the real objects of the Society. He entirely disapproved of the misapplication of the funds, and concluded by stating that, as the printing was done by estimate open to several persons, it was impossible for any person to rob them of 20 per cent., as was falsely asserted."

In 1849, Mr. Tiplady, in a letter to the *Preston Guardian*, called public attention to the polluted state of the Blake-

water Brook at that time, and contrasted it with the purity of the Brook in his boyhood. "Then," he wrote, "how beautiful to stroll, by its devious courses, along the fields to Brookhouse; to the rookery at Little Harwood Hall; and on to the confines of the Sour Milk Hall farm. Then, following its mazy current, we came to Whitebirk. There we sat down on its banks, listening to the sweet carolling of the birds; ever and anon refreshing ourselves with copious draughts of the pure liquid, and, pulling our homely crust of 'pie and other prog' from our pockets, feasted right merrily. Ah, those were happy days! But now, poor old Brook, how art thou fallen!" Mr. Tiplady had the satisfaction to note that the week after the appearance of his letter the Commissioners commenced cleansing the brook.

"Charlie" Tiplady, if not a poet, was a fluent rhymer, and had a smart style in rough satire. In my sketch of George Dewhurst, I recalled the hubbub caused, amongst the townspeople, by the prodigal expenditure of the churchwardens, on dinners for themselves, in 1831-32. Mr. Tiplady, then a man of twenty-three, wrote two or three sets of satirical rhymes ridiculing the wardens. One of the printed pieces is headed "The sorrowful Lamentation over the Last Dinner," said to be "copied from an old manuscript in the possession of Joseph Tully and Thomas Briers, Esqrs." I quote a couple of verses. The wardens sing:—

"Oft have we lolled in happy halcyon gaze,
Where William rears his goodly sign,
Long laughed at little Moses' pompous ways,
And sanctified the sacramental holidays
In rich libations of the juicy vine.

"No loyal toast with us was e'er disgraced,
Or pledged in old Joe Royal's slop,
For had an angel's form the goblet graced,
Or old Sir Nick (Lord save us !) there been placed,
They had not saved themselves a single drop."

When the "New Market House" was opened, on January 28th, 1848, Charles Tiplady was the commemorating bard. The following lines are from the poem he composed and printed for the event :—

"Loud ring the merry peal with gladsome sound !
O'er every native hill the shout rebound.
Be this a day of honour to the Town,
Worthy to children's children handed down.
Be hushed the stern reproach, the bitter sneer ;
Let scornful finger not be pointed here.
BLACKBURN beside her neighbour Towns shall stand,
To boast a worthy name within our land ;
Her commerce flourish, and her wealth increase ;
Her sons be valiant, yet delight in peace ;
Her daughters shine with modest grace,
The virtuous matrons of a happy race."

Like other printers, "Charlie" Tiplady, now and then, by inadvertently printing libellous matter, exposed himself to a legal action. In February, 1850, he printed a placard for the journeymen tailors, headed "The Sweating System," reflecting upon Mr. Turner, a master tailor in the town, who had him served with a writ for libel. Mr. Tiplady would not defend the libel, though the tailors would have done so. "I went," he writes, "to Preston with Mr. Leonard Wilkinson, and settled the business. The tailors upon this were in a great rage at me. The whole affair, besides loss of time, anxiety, and other inconvenience, cost me £12, which the tailors refused to pay. This is not the first time I have been led into an error by the over-officiousness of William Durham, at whose request I printed the bill."

Messrs. W. and C. Tiplady began to print and publish a book almanac, partly filled with local annals and information, which, I think, was the first local almanac produced in Blackburn, about 1834 or 1835. It was issued for many years, first by the two brothers, and, after William's death, by Charles Tiplady. It contained descriptions of town improvements, new buildings, &c., in the preceding year, and had a good sale, I believe. "Charlie" Tiplady came to be looked upon as an authority on facts concerning the town, and other matters. He was generally well-informed, but not quite infallible, any more than the rest of us. He was frequently referred to to decide a dispute on which a wager had been laid. I recollect that, about the year 1869, when Lord Hartington, who had failed to carry North Lancashire at the election in 1868, was elected member for the Radnor Burghs, two men, in Blackburn, fell into a dispute as to whether the Radnor Burghs were situated in Scotland or Wales. One was a Tory, and he would take "Charlie" Tiplady's ruling; the other was a Radical, and he would let the editor of the *Blackburn Times* decide. I was then editor of the *Blackburn Times*. The two men went first to Mr. Tiplady, who told them the Radnor Burghs were certainly in Scotland. Then they came to the *Times* Office, and I told them the Radnor Burghs were unquestionably in Wales. This left the decision in suspense Mr. Tiplady charged 3d. for his trouble. The men were dissatisfied, for the stakes could not be handed over. Again Mr. Tiplady was visited, and he stuck to his first *dictum*, that the Radnor Burghs were in Scotland. Again I was appealed to, and I got a large map of Wales, and showed the men the county and town of Radnor upon it, and that settled the point. Not long after, Mr. Tiplady was taking his glass one

evening, in the bar-parlour of one of the central inns. Amongst the company was a young man of literary ability, James Walsh, who has, for many years, resided in the United States, where he is known as "Professor Walsh." He was rather fond of showing off his knowledge before company, and, after he had rattled away for a while, on that evening, "Charlie" Tiplady became nettled, and, being thirty years the senior of "Jim" Walsh, met his boastings by saying, in an audible mutter, "Impudent puppy! I've forgotten a vast deal more than ever he knew." James Walsh retorted by calling out, in the hearing of the whole company, "Does anybody know where the Radnor Burghs are situated?" The laugh turned against "Charlie" Tiplady; and the late Mr. Aitcheson, who was in the room, added to the amusement by saying, as if he was sorry for it, but the truth had to be told:—"Bigad. I believe they're i' Wales!"

As a politician, on the Conservative side, Mr Tip'ady was, whilst yet a young man, conspicuous. He aided the elder Mr. William Henry Hornby to organize the workingmen of the party into the "Blackburn Operative Conservative Association," in 1835, and he presided at its annual meeting in 1839. He was then President of the Association. At the election of 1841, he was one of the leaders of the party (in the Old Bull Inn, the Tory headquarters), rejoicing together over the success of Mr. John Hornby in defeating Mr. Turner and taking the second seat, when the inn was attacked by the Turnerites in great force, and was entered and sacked by the mob; and he has left a most graphic description of the scene, and the sudden vanishing of the Conservative leaders to save their lives. I will extract a short passage. He wrote:—"It was my lot to be stationed in the Bull Inn during the whole fray, in

which I witnessed three of the most astonishing transitions of human passion that I recollect ever to have beheld, viz., despondency consequent on the false report that we had lost; excessive triumph on the announcement that we had won by *one vote*; and dreadful terror when the mob attacked the inn. In the first instance, all was solemn silence and dejected countenance—you might have heard a pin fall; in the second, men appeared positively intoxicated with joy—such gratulations and shaking of hands and wishing of joy—I never saw anything equal to it. It was in the height of this bewilderment that the sound of the first missle crashing through a window reached the ears of the assembly. The transition, awfully sudden, was yet somewhat ridiculous, as showing the effect of fear, on the strongest nerves, when suddenly and unexpectedly attacked. In an instant, men of the most undoubted courage fled panic-struck into holes and corners, over roofs and buildings, into cellars, attics, stables, &c. I remained with a few until the riot was quelled." The rioting was renewed on the 25th of April in the next year (1842), when the result of Mr. Turner's petition for a scrutiny was known; and Mr. Tiplady saw that evening "a large mob congregated in the (old) Market-place, who revenged themselves on Mr. Hornby by smashing the Bull windows; the police and soldiers were called out, and dispersed them in all directions."

Mr. Tiplady bore his part in subsequent contested elections in 1847, in 1852, 1853, 1859, 1865, and 1868, of which those of 1852, 1853, and 1868 were about as rough as that of 1841. Conservative though he was, he gave his second vote to Mr. Pilkington, the Liberal candidate and Member, on more than one occasion; but this was when his own party did not oppose Mr. Pilkington.

The service of Mr. Tiplady, in the government of the town, began as one of the "Improvement Commissioners," who transferred their powers to the Corporation in 1854. He was one of the Committee named in the Charter of Incorporation, granted in 1851, to carry out its provisions, but he was not a member of the first Town Council. He contested St. Mary's Ward in November, 1857, but was beaten by 72 votes; and he complains, as defeated candidates sometimes do, of the electioneering tricks of his opponents:—"There was a great deal of personation and other rascally proceeding." He stood again for St. Mary's Ward in September, 1858, at a bye-election, and was again defeated, as he records:—"Did not feel any interest in the contest, but something must be done to stop the extravagant waste of money. The election was gained by Mr. Turnbull." The next year he was nominated for the same ward, but declined to stand. In 1860, Mr. Tiplady was nominated for a safe seat in St. John's Ward, and elected. He represented the ward until he was elected an alderman in 1865. He was a principal spokesman of the Conservative party in the Town Council, whilst he sat in it; he retired in 1871.

During his public life, which extended over about thirty-five years, from 1836 to 1870, "Charlie" Tiplady delivered innumerable speeches, on a great variety of subjects and local questions, and on every manner of occasion. His style of speaking was peculiar to himself—sententious, slightly pompous or stilted, and apt to be wordy and long-winded; but plain, direct, and emphatic as Lancashire men generally are who can speak on the platform, or in debate of a deliberative body or committee. He knew what he was talking about, as a rule, being painstaking in the acquisition

of the facts, before he spoke. I have heard many an effective speech by "Charlie." He was not daunted by opposition, but roused and stimulated. His language was not too refined, but it was not vulgar; it was good, grammatical English. In conversation he frequently used certain phrases, and one of these was "*very proper*," which passed into the local slang so that, at one time, in a bar-parlour or a club billiard-room or card-room, the response to a remark was commonly "very proper"

In person "Charlie" Tiplady was thin, and rather below middle height. His face was pale, his head somewhat square-shaped, and his hair, which he did not lose in old age, iron-gray. His features were regular and expressed intelligence and dogged determination. His gait was characteristic; he walked with his head forward, and eyes bent downward, as if intent upon his business; his walk was plodding, and marked at each step by a slight nod of the head, if I might so describe the movement. He had always a careworn look; but after a long illness which he suffered, in the second half of 1864, in which he underwent a very severe and critical operation, and was for a time at death's-door, he was, for the remaining few years of his life, haggard-visaged, feeble, and the mere shadow of his former self. He had his weaknesses, as a man, and his prejudices, but withal "Charlie" was a capable, useful, public-spirited citizen whom all appreciated and respected, and not least those who, on occasion, had been engaged in opposition to him, or in controversy with him, and knew, by experience, his ability, tenacity, and resource in disputation. Mr. Tiplady died, aged 65 years, October 15th, 1873.

XVI.—WILLIAM BILLINGTON, OPERATIVE, SCEPTIC, AND POET.

The recollections of youth are long-lasting. To them might be applied the lines of a Scottish poet :—

> "Time but the impression deeper makes,
> As streams their channels deeper wear."

One of the clearest memories of the first years of my residence in Blackburn, when I was not more than sixteen years old, is that of meeting, in the street, a young man, whose jacket, trousers, and vest of drab corduroy; neckerchief tied in a careless knot, showing no collar above; check-shirt just visible below; soft cloth cap, and clogs; suggested the factory operative of the period; upon whom, nevertheless, my observation was fixed, as we passed each other, and whom I turned my head to steal another glance at, as he walked in the opposite direction, with a slightly slouching gait. How happened it that, of the thousands of operatives in the town at this period, this particular one should arrest the notice of a lad who was an entire stranger? Excepting in the aspect of his face, the expression of rapt thought in the full gray eyes, of intellectuality in the forehead, and of character in the compressed lips, there was nothing about him to distinguish him from the crowd of men of his class. I must have seen him out of doors once or twice (probably in the vicinity of the Mechanics' Institution,

which at that time, in a limited way, served the purpose that both the Free Library and the Technical School more adequately do now, and which he, as well as I, frequented), before I ascertained that his name was William Billington, and that he wrote poetry. Next, somebody told me that this pensive-looking workman was a disbeliever in Christ and the Christian religion. The word applied to him, by my informant, was "infidel," no doubt. Everybody who dared to question the dogmatic forms of the religious faith of Christendom, then presented, or denied the verbal inspiration and infallibility of the Bible, was marked by the designation "infidel." But infidelity was then far more rife in Lancashire, amongst self-taught men of the People, or at least more aggressive and offensive, than it is at the present time. The date to which I refer is from forty to forty-five years ago.

I think William Billington became known in the town, as a public denier and assailant of the religious belief, before he won a more enviable local repute as a poet. Yet how he passed into that shadow of scepticism is not apparent. His father and mother, I think, were Roman Catholics, and the thoughts of one brought up in the Church of Rome must undergo a strong revulsion before he can stand forth as an atheist or a "Secularist." In France and Italy, pronounced atheists, born Roman Catholics, are said to be numerous; but few such cases occur in this country, so far as we, who do not belong to that community, hear. A few particulars of William Billington's early history will, however, properly precede further reference to his anti-religious opinions and his part in local platform debate and controversy when he arrived at man's estate.

William Billington was a native of Blackburn parish, but not of Blackburn town. He was born at a house called the Yew Trees, in the township of Salmesbury, not far from the "Five-Barred Gate," on the new road from Blackburn to Preston. The date of his birth was April 3rd, 1827. He had two younger brothers, Joseph and James, both of whom settled in Blackburn, and survived William. The father was a contractor for road-making; but he died when William was only seven years old. His mother was left with several young children, and was unable to give them much education. At the age of eight or nine, William was sent to the old spinning mill at Mellor Brook, to learn "throstle-spinning." His mother removed to Blackburn in 1839, and William, then aged twelve, fouud work as a "doffer" at Brookhouse Mills. Later, it is on record that he worked as a "stripper and grinder" at Navigation Mill; and, subsequently, he began to weave upon the power-looms at the "Dandy" factory in Jubilee-street. He earned his living as a weaver for a considerable number of years; but, after he married, he desired to earn better wages, and, with that object, learned tape-sizing. Thus he had experience of the operative's work in a cotton factory in the carding and spinning rooms, in the weaving-shed, and in the taping-room. No man, therefore, could enter into the hardships, trials, and discontents of the Lancashire factory-worker more thoroughly than William Billington; and his verse is filled with the complainings of a sensitive spirit, to whom the toil of the mill was ever extremely irksome, and the buffetings, incidental to the operative's condition, insupportable.

Nature is the first teacher, and the lifelong guide, inspirer, and comforter of the poet. It was well for Billington

that he was not born and reared in some dingy back street of a manfacturing town. Twelve years of his childhood were spent in the country, and his genius was nursed amid those flowery dells and copses and woodlands of Samlesbury and Balderstone, which form a portion of the diversified scenery of the glorious Ribble Valley. It was somewhere near the time when William Billington was first known to me, he being then about twenty-four years old, that he commenced the poem printed in his first volume, which enshrines some "Recollections of Childhood," suggested by seeing a honey-suckle brought from his birthplace. In those verses, after mentioning his father's death, "e'er seven summers since my birth had fled," which "broke the fairy spell that bound my heart," he proceeds to recall the delights of the morning of existence, played away in ceaseless joy and merriment in his father's cottage, and to express "the hopeless wish to be what then I was":—

"To wander in the woods, as once I did,
And listen to the music of the grove;
To view the towering pine, or pyramid
Of rocks, glassed in the torrent, from above,
While heaven's blue to earth's deep centre drove
Its bending arch, and on my wondering eye,
Flashed images of beauty—stars that move
In harmony through ether's realms on high,
Deep-tossing in the gulf of an inverted sky."

"But scenes like these have vanished long ago,
And other objects entered in their room,
My mirthful heart a magazine of woe
Hath now become. The beauty and the bloom
Of boyhood, now lie buried in the tomb
Of Memory; and yet I am but young.
My task is now to tend the labouring loom,
And work the woof, yet needs must ply my tongue,
Impelled by heart and head, and sorrow is my song."

Of other of William Billington's earlier poems, which are autobiographical, "A Life Lyric" is one of the most pleasing and pathetically-suggestive. The young poet seemed to have ceased to enjoy his existence when Fate drove him from the sweet rural nook into the town, and consigned him to such labour as that of the cotton factory, before the "Ten Hours Bill" was passed. Amidst his weariness and dejection—

> "The green hedge-rows where the wild rose grows,
> The daisy-dappled mead,
> The cloud-like woods that follow the floods,
> And the dawn-flushed mountain bead;
> And all the range of greenery, grange,
> Dim forest and flower-flushed field,
> And wind-lashed trees, that surged like seas,
> In Memory stand revealed."

One mystery, and marvel, of our operative-poet's life, in that second ten years which for all of us—whom fortune does not attend at birth—opens our eyes to the stern realities of existence, unexplained by his verse, is how the poor factory lad, without schooling to start him, contrived to acquire a complete knowledge of the grammar of his mother-tongue, and, whilst pursuing that study, found time to read so extensively, that, with regard to the works of the greatest English poets, his acquaintance with them, by the time he began to compose poetry himself, was so familiar and thorough, that I can only compare it with the exhaustive knowledge of those who, for literary purposes, as editors and commentators, have spent years in the special study of certain authors. I know that William Billington, at the age of twenty-six, had not only read and re-read Shelley, Byron, Keats, and Burns through, until he could recite hundreds of lines of each of them, but was

well versed in the older poets, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespere, Milton, Dryden, and Pope; and in the later works of Scott, Coleridge, and Wordsworth. His memory for poetry was astonishing; and one way in which he was fond of displaying it was by suggesting that an idea, metaphor or expression, used by a native rhymer was already appropriated by some great poet, and had been borrowed from him, knowingly or unknowingly, by the local poetaster.

Shelley was the poet in whom William Billington most gloried, when I used to compare likings with him in poetry; and I always thought that Billington had founded the style of his lyrical poems on that of Shelley; whilst I also surmised that he had imbibed his religious scepticism and his Pantheistic conceptions from the same source. His dialect satires and humorous pieces remind one rather of Burns, who was another of Billington's favourites.

About the years 1850-51, William Billington contributed to the "Poet's Corner" of the only Blackburn newspaper then published (the *Blackburn Standard*), the first poems of his I remember to have seen in print, and he continued to publish his pieces, as written, through the local Press (in the *Blackburn Times* soon after it was started in 1855) until 1860. He had then written enough poetry to make a volume, and he was anxious to give his verse the chance of survival in book-form. The late Mr. Clough liberally offered to be responsible for the cost of printing the poems. The volume was locally printed, by the late Mr. J. N. Haworth, and published in 1861. Its title is, "*Sheen and Shade. Lyrical Poems.* By WILLIAM BILLINGTON." My copy is a gift from the poet, bearing his autograph. I had gladly helped a little in putting it through the Press. This first collection of the poems of one who was foremost in

genius and gifts of Blackburn poets, I estimate now, on the whole, quite as highly as I did thirty-two years ago when it appeared. William Billington was at his freshest, purest, truest, best, when he wrote the contents of this book. The first poem in it, "The Trinity of Life," tells, in somewhat mystical language, how the poet's mind fought its way through doubt, despair, and selfhood, to faith, hope, and charity. The thought in several of the other lyrics approaches sublimity; and well do I remember how these affected me with respect for the humble weaver who could compose them, when they originally appeared in the newspapers. There is an exalted grandeur, for example, in such lines as the following:—

"The darkling heavens were flushed with flaming spheres,
As dewdrops numberless! And God, the God
Of earth, is God of all those dark and bright
Unfathomable depths, where wildest flight
Of human fancy fails! This mundane clod—
Man's temporal home—how infinitely small,
Compared with Night whom world-starred robes invest!
Nor would our little Solar system's fall
E'er dim the lustre of his crown of light;
For Night is God's own bard—oh! how I envy night!"

In this volume, "*Sheen and Shade*," the "Poems for the People" contain many inspiriting lines—aspirations after noble ideals of life, and manly invocations to courage, trust, and faithful performance of duty; and the poet, often gloomy, in his gloomiest moments, as expressed in the closing lines of the poem, "Death of the Old Year, 1856," has a vision of the coming triumph of virtue in freedom:—

—"'Twill light the murky mine
Where labour moils, in more than midnight gloom;
Trim Hope's faint lamp, Grief's channelled cheek illume;
Though sin and sorrow mock the mortal bier,
Mankind may yet be better, happier; fear

Not, for the rose that now begins to bloom
On Freedom's cheek is fadeless ; year by year
'Twill blush, and burn, and brightlier glow, and dear
As life be held—dearer than all save God."

Twenty-two years elapsed, between the publication of William Billington's first volume and his second. In that long interval, as with Cowper, "time had passed with him but roughly." He had grown from a young man into an old man—prematurely old : but that was not the great pity —that befalls us all in turn ; we cannot live on, and yet keep age at a distance Our poet's domestic life was, for the most part, unhappy and comfortless. His first wife, a Blackburn lass, was what a workman's wife should be : affectionate, industrious ; she tried to make the cottage home snug, and frugal fare satisfying, on small means. But she died, after a few years and left the poet with two children, son and daughter. In his second marriage he showed a strange lack of judgment in his choice of a partner. This wife was an Irishwoman (many Irishwomen make kind, affable wives, but this was an exception). With her Billington was unhappy, and after one child (a son) was born, they parted. He had given up work in the mill, which, to men, after the age of 40 or 45, is found too exacting, and taken a beerhouse, the "Nag's Head," in Northgate. William Billington suffered all his life from a lack of more refined and cultured society. I mean that he stood in want, as all men and women of high imaginative faculty and intense thinking power must, of intellectual peers who could respond to the demands of his nature, and enable him to develop that which was greatest in him to the utmost. But, thrust a man of lofty intuition among a herd of sensual creatures, and he will at last begin to sink also. Ordinary beerhouse company, I should imagine, is

not exactly of the kind to help to make a poet (who, as keeper of the house, must mix with it) more poetical, or to maintain the elevated state of the moral sense in which he ought to live. The effect of an occupation and surrounding so unfavourable was inevitably to deteriorate the moral tone of a man who had once soared, in his happiest moods, to the upper regions of thought and fancy. The change was perceptible to the reader, who had possessed and read the earlier volume of Billington's poetry, when the later one was issued. This book was entitled "*Lancashire Songs, Poems, and Sketches*," and was published in 1883 Excepting in two or three sonnets, towards the end, we look in vain, in this book, for the deep questioning, the glowing imagery, the reverential spirit, the yearning for a glimpse of the unseen, which are found in many passages of the earlier lyrics. Instead, the poet has "declined upon a range of lower feelings" and sentiments. The "Lancashire Songs" are not, mainly, simple idyls like the songs of Waugh—songs which can be set to music and sung—but more in the nature of satires and skits; in which there is, indeed, plenty of native humour and wit, but of the description which verges upon coarseness and impropriety. They are cynical and ribald, imputing to humanity at large (excepting the poorest beggar of all, who accuses the whole World of wronging, trampling upon, and ill-using him, but will not consider how he has ill-used himself and the World), the meanest, basest, and most inhuman conduct and actuation. How differently a genuine poetic faculty, of a high order like Billington's, would have rounded off its product if the man had but been fairly prosperous and encircled by kindlier, chaster influences in his later years! Yet, considered not so much as a volume of poetry but as a collec

tion of rhymed local traditions, social incidents and characteristics, and witty sallies and sarcasms, written in the idiom and dialect of the Lancashire peasantry, the book is very clever, and the rhymes full of vivacity and Hudibrastic humour and point. Its contents were, doubtless, more to the popular taste than the solemnly sonorous verse of Billington's first book ; and, whilst his claim to be a true poet must rest chiefly upon the latter, the dialect rhymes of the second volume are likely to secure many more readers and admirers.

Either in conversation, or whenever he could find persons to listen to him, William Billington was a ceaseless talker. His mind being full of quick ideas, and of words to convey them, he was wont to pour out a cataract of speech which swept down opposition and contradiction. It was rather his passion for disputation, than his rooted disbelief, I suspect, which caused him to be conspicuous in his young manhood, among the Blackburn Secularists, in the active opposition then maintained to the religion of the Churches. At one time, if you went to hear a lecturer in defence of Christianity who had come to answer a previous lecture by Mr. Holyoake, Mr. Robert Cooper, or Mr. Southwell, you expected to see, the moment the lecturer had finished, "Will" Billington or "Tom" Stephenson, most likely both, one after the other, mount their seats to question and challenge the Christian champion. Eventually, Billington seems to have let Secularism drop ; and his poetry, as we have seen, is pervaded by the recognition of the Deity and the assertion of the immortality of the spiritual nature of man.

William Billington remained, all his life, an inveterate polemic, however. Once start him off, and he would argue

with you the day, or the night, through, if you would stay to continue the contention, with all the logical armoury of proposition and premiss, syllogism and sophism, analogy and inference. He had so much confidence in his own powers of argument that, rather than be denied the pleasure of confounding an opponent before a company, he would give the man he wanted to tackle the choice of sides on the question mooted. Of course he was egotistic and dogmatic in his manner, as a man of power cannot help becoming if he seldom meets his intellectual match in the confined sphere in which he is condemned to move. Had Billington, at the age when his mind and character were maturing, been placed where he could hold converse with men of superior culture, accomplished scholars and strong thinkers, he would have grown into a greater man than he ever was, and, withal, a more modest one.

I will relate an occurrence, connected with William Billington's tenancy of the "Nag's Head" tavern. The members of the Literary Club had been having one of their evenings, devoted to elocution and literary criticism, at the Club, and, at its close, about 10 o'clock, a proposal was made that the members present should go across to the "Nag's Head" and spend an hour with the poet Billington. The visit, it was thought, might gratify and cheer him a little A party of twenty, or so, of us went over. Billington was delighted to receive us, and we were accommodated in his largest room, which was closed for the night to other customers. Then followed what Professor Wilson might have described as one of his "*Noctes Ambrosianæ.*" Among the party were poets, chief of them the host himself; excellent elocutionists, singers, journalists, and literary critics. Each had some contribution to make to the enter-

tainment. Billington was in his natural element. Like "Tam o' Shanter," among his cronies in the inn, William "was glorious, o'er all the ills of life victorious." Recitation, criticism, song, discussion, comical story, and bandied "chaff," succeeded each other. Not much liquor was drunk, but the "flow of soul" was free and abundant. The time passed too swiftly. The hour of closing public-houses was then one o'clock; and before his visitors could believe it was midnight, Billington had reluctantly to tell them that the clock had struck the hour. But, at the moment, some one had just begun to recite a composition, and the company must stay five minutes to hear it. Billington was very uneasy; he implored his literary friends not to land him in a police prosecution for keeping open after lawful hours, and said he knew that the constable on that beat had been trying to catch him. It was just fifteen minutes past one, and the company rising to go, when a rattle at the front door, which was closed, was heard. The door was opened; in marched the constable. He entered the room with an air of triumph—at last he had got a case against Billington, the landlord; but he was not quite so "cocky" as he had been, in the lobby, when he saw who the persons were that filled the room. It was very well to summon the keeper of the house, but to haul up, along with him, more than twenty persons, the whole Literary Club, one might say, including nearly all the members who cared anything for literature, and to charge them with "aiding and abetting" a deliberate breach of the licensing law, was rather a bold step to take. The party spoke in exoneration of Mr. Billington, the landlord, saying, which was true, that not a glass had been filled for half an hour prior to closing time, and that he would

have turned the company out punctually at one o'clock had he been able. The constable replied that he had no option but to report the case, and, no doubt, he did so. Poor Billington was much alarmed; and several of his literary friends did not much like the thought of being exposed at the Borough Police Court as belated topers—a character in which they were not accustomed to appear. However, they were spared the ordeal. Mr. Potts, the then Chief Constable, used his discretion, and, as it was not a very "bad case," and he, perhaps, hesitated to arraign the *literati* of of Blackburn in a body, nothing more was heard of the matter, and the incident is now for the first time disclosed to the public. I hope it is too late to institute a prosecution (it is over twenty years since the occurrence), or those few of the offenders who are alive may be in for a penalty after all. At any rate, poor Billington is now beyond the reach of the law.

As a young man, William Billington had a handsome face, with uncommon features; the eyes were especially fine; the hair, on his shapely head, was light; and he wore a beard on the chin only. His facial outline used to remind me rather of that of his favourite poet, Shelley, in the well-known portrait, except that Billington's face had more virility in it; that of Shelley was almost feminine in its lineament. The portrait of the poet in his last years, after a photograph, inserted as frontispiece to his second book, published a few months before his death, and from which the subscription portrait hung in the hall of the Free Library was painted, is a faithful one of that period, but he was broken down in health when that portrait was taken; the features look worn and pinched, and the expression is painful and sad. An earlier portrait I have is more pleasing,

and represents him in health, and hopeful, as he was about the time his first book was given to the World. In 1883 his ailments had grown upon him so that he was afraid he might not live to see his "Lancashire Songs" through the Press. Mr. Billington died in his 57th year, on the 3rd of January, 1884. In the *Blackburn Times*, after his death, the late Mr. John Walker, Mr. George Hull, Mr. Jardine, and other local writers of verse, offered poetical tributes to his genius. That of Mr. George Hull contained these lines :—

"The singer hath departed, and no more
Is heard the singer's voice strong clear and sweet ;
Cheering the crowds in factory and in street
With melody, as in the days of yore.
His was a master mind, and 'twill be long
Before old Blackburn, through the smoke and gloom
That gather round the busy lathe and loom,
Shall see another, half so bright in song"

Mr. John Walker's ode was the worthiest memorial of a brother bard. The last stanza but one reads :—

"Thou hadst thy weaker moods, and who has not?
The eagle looks not always at the sun ;
Fated to struggle with a lowly lot,
Thy life a course of "sheen and shade" has run.
Lowly, and yet how high,
Time yet shall testify ;
For voiceless crowds
(Like hurrying clouds)
Go by, and are forgotten as they perish ;
Until one comes like thee
Gifted with melody—
A singer whose sweet song the World will cherish."

The last stanza of Mr. Walker's poem was inscribed upon Billington's tomb. He was buried in the Roman Catholic portion of Blackburn Cemetery; and over his grave a tomb

stone of freestone was erected, which has this epitaph (with the head of the poet carved in stone on the tomb):—"Erected by public subscription to the Memory of WILLIAM BILLINGTON (author of 'Sheen and Shade,' 'Lancashire Songs, Poems, and Sketches,' &c.), who was born April 3rd, 1827, and departed this life January 3rd, 1884.

"Dead and yet living—living in that verse
Our children shall rehearse;
Cleaving to what is fair and good and wise.
Let the dross pass away,
Let meaner things decay—
The poet never dies."

XVII.—JAMES BOYLE, CONFECTIONER AND ALDERMAN.

IF it be allowed, as I for one hold it, that the citizen who, in his day and generation, renders the greatest service to his fellow-citizens, is worthy of the highest respect and lasting remembrance ; and that the man who, by the utmost exercise of his mind and body, of the austere powers of endurance, persistence, self-command, and self-denial, hews out of the obstruction of adverse Circumstance his upward way in life, and forges the weapons of his victorious warfare against the hostile forces of condition and chance, is the truest type of humanity ; then it may be said that there has lived in our town, in this century, no man whose career and character were more worthy to be honoured, after he was dead, than that of the remarkable townsman—James Boyle. He was by no means faultless ; he was not fitted to attract the gaze of worshippers of style and elegance ; the severity with which he had used himself might, at times, be repeated in the sternness with which he held others to the thorough performance of duty ; and the struggles and conflicts of his life may have checked the flow of the original geniality of his nature towards those who were not included in his circle of friends. But, in all

those qualities which go to make up a character of exceeding strength and of merit, James Boyle was second to none of his contemporaries in this community. His own personal history, and rise, from the smallest beginnings, not alone to private productiveness and competence, but to public repute, position, and influence, might be suggested as in itself a microcosm of the history of Blackburn as an industrial and trading centre, and a self-governing Corporation, during the more than fifty years that James Boyle lived and pursued his incessant and multiform activities in its midst. We may not, perhaps, fully realize how much the development of a town is connected, nay, identical, with the growth and achievement of a limited number of energetic and enterprising individuals, to whom the mass of folk are necessary as executants, it is true, but only follow where Nature's constituted leaders show the way. Before this sketch is finished I shall attempt to indicate in words the characteristics of my present subject; but first let me relate a selection of those incidents in James Boyle's life which reflect and express one or other of the man's distinguishing traits.

Although Mr. James Boyle was not a native of Blackburn, he spent all—excepting a few early years—his life in this town, and therefore we are entitled to call him a "Blackburn Character." His birthplace was the town of Bolton. His father was a humble handloom weaver at Astley Bridge, near Bolton. One of his brothers, Hugh Boyle, became known, in after life, as an evangelist, or town missionary, at Kendal, connected with the Independent denomination of Nonconformists. James was sent to work, as boys of his class were, eighty years ago, when very young. His first employment was in a spinning factory; and he continued

in that kind of work until he was fourteen years old, when he decided to seek another occupation, and had to come to Blackburn to find it; that would be about the year 1818. There was, at that date, one William Hodgson (his neighbours knew him as "Owd Billy Hodgson"), who carried on the singularly assorted business of "confectioner and barber," at No. 44, Salford. To him young Jemmy Boyle was bound apprentice, to learn both trades—how to make toffy and pastry one part of the day, and how to shave beards and cut hair (or "toppin," as the natives called the natural thatch of the human head), at other parts of the day. He was an "indoor 'prentice," and lived with his master, but his home was still in Bolton, and he walked the distance, thirteen miles, each way, at the week's-end, until, I suppose, he married, as soon as he was out of his apprenticeship, and became a householder in Blackburn.

Young James Boyle was, I understand, as a lad, not quite so good a barber as confectioner. He was always short-sighted, and some of the customers, observing the fact, would not trust him to use the razor upon them. The first person shaved by the lad was the father of no less a personage than Daniel Thwaites, who good-naturedly broke down the bar to his advancement by saying that he might try his hand upon him. James was determined to push his way, and, before he was of age, he had left Mr. Hodgson to start as confectioner for himself. His capital, to begin with, was counted by shillings, not by pounds; his first essential plant for toffy-making consisted of an iron pan (a brass one cost too much) and scissors to cut the sweets. The premises he took first had been previously known as "Old Phœbe's shop"; and in it the elderly dame had sold stockings, worsted, &c. Thence James Boyle moved (in a

little time) to a shop somewhat lower down the street on the same side; and next he took his old master's (Hodgson's) shop. It was in that identical shop Mr. Boyle worked his way, as a confectioner, for considerably more than forty years, whilst he attained various honourable and responsible positions of public trust and service.

A confectioner of that period did not find the business a light one, and James Boyle worked much harder than any servant would have toiled. At times he was at it most of the night making the confectionery, so that he might be at liberty during the day to go out with portions of it and sell it. Usually he began his work at a very early hour in the morning. He did not, in the daytime, remain on the premises for customers to come. He travelled miles to find them, and took with him his cakes, his "spice," toffy, or "sweetstuff," and other articles in a large, shallow, oblong basket. This basket could only be conveniently carried on the vendor's head. Its weight, filled with its stock, would be from 50 to 60lbs.; and, with this heavy load, Mr. Boyle, when a young man, for years journeyed as far as Darwen, Oswaldtwistle, Church Parish, and Great Harwood. His road to Oswaldtwistle, by Knuzden, lay over Stanhill and Moor-End, and he lessened his load as he proceeded, by sales to the dwellers on the roadside. There were, and still are, collieries on that side of Blackburn, and sometimes the colliers loafing above-ground in the lanes would ask the confectioner, as he passed along, poising the basket on his head, to pay for them a gill of beer. One day a collier made this demand upon Mr. Boyle, a little beyond Knuzden Brook, to whom he replied :—"I'll give thee threepence if thou'll carry my basket to the top of the brow." The collier agreed readily, and took the basket, and got his threepence;

but, as he set down the basket at Stanhill, he declared that he would not again carry it so far for three shillings, big strong fellow though he was.

At the entrance to the then village of Over Darwen, on the way from Blackburn, stood a shop or house the tenant of which was one of James Boyle's best customers; but James had a competitor for that bit of trade, who was one of a trio of brothers surnamed Dickinson; each of them had a toffy shop in Blackburn; they were nicknamed respectively "Toffy Dick," "Toffy Jem," and "Toffy Tom" I am not sure which of the three it was, but one went to Darwen regularly, with his basketful of sweetmeats, just as James Boyle did; frequently on the same day, and about the same hour. Both, in turn, did business with the shop at this end of Darwen, so they fell into the habit of racing for that goal, as they trudged from Blackburn with their wares. The handloom weavers who lived in that neighbourhood, and wove at their own cottages, entered with gusto into the struggle of the two equally weighted Blackburn toffy-men to secure that particular customer and they would turn out into the road, forming a small crowd, and shout their encouragement to the competitors, in such words as these, "Goo on little Jim, thou'rt fost yet!" Once, Mr. Boyle's rival, who was a taller man, managed to reach the spot a yard or two ahead, but, whilst he was lowering his basket from his head, Jem Boyle was there too, and, by a dexterous twist, managed to slip his body, basket and all, through the doorway, and snapped up the order. Trade competition may operate on a larger scale, but it is not keener than was that of these Blackburn toffy-men of sixty or sixty-five years since, even to-day. The three brothers Dickinson, whom I have mentioned, appropriated, amongst

them, the largest share of the retail trade in "sweetstuff" in Blackburn, when Mr. Boyle commenced on his own account. One of their shops was in Penny-street; and they had a stall on the old Market Place on market-days, where they sold their toffy, of the several kinds familiar to the taste of the fathers and mothers, or grandfathers and grandmothers, of the present generation of Blackburn youngsters. But James Boyle had a great deal more commercial spirit and "go" than the elder toffy-makers, and, in the course of no very lengthened period, he left them all behind. It was not accomplished, however, without an amount of hard work which, to most workers, would have been slavery.

James Boyle, in no transaction lagging or hesitating, in good time became a family man. He was bound to have a wife, to attend to the shop and the continuation of the confectionery-making in the rear, whilst he was travelling his outside rounds. He wedded a daughter of Thomas Sharples, of Penny-street, an old soldier and pensioner who must have seen hard service in the long war then recently closed at Waterloo. Old Tom Sharples had been provided with employment as "odd man" in the office of Mr. Wilkinson, the attorney-at-law. Mr. Boyle's first wife bore him nine children before she died. Two of them yet survive—Mr. William Boyle, J.P., and Miss Jane Boyle. Some time after he lost his first wife, Mr. Boyle married, for his second, Elizabeth Robinson, of Sedburgh. She was mother of thirteen children, of whom six are living, five sons, John (ex-Councillor Boyle, clothier and pawnbroker), James and Robert (who, as partners, carry on the confectionery manufactory), Hugh (who is in business in Bolton), and Harry; and one daughter, Elizabeth, who is the wife of Mr. John Coffey, builder. So that, in all, the subject of

my present sketch was the father of no fewer than twenty-two children—a number which would appal many men at the thought; but the family responsibility, great as it was, never daunted him, nor did the expense of an exceptional number of boys and girls to be fed, clothed, and schooled appear to retard the father's advance in the World. Clearly James Boyle, in those years, whatever his other opinions might be on things political and social, was no Malthusian.

He was a politician, too, and a warm one. He began as a Radical of the School of Henry Hunt. As a lad, he had seen, in 1819, after the affair of "Peterloo," that hero of the multitude brought through Blackburn in custody, guarded by a detachment of cavalry, being conveyed to Lancaster Castle. And, as a young man of twenty-six years, though not yet an elector (for Blackburn did not become a Parliamentary borough until 1832), James Boyle was an ardent partizan of Harry Hunt in 1830, when he twice contested Preston against the Whig Lord Stanley (afterwards Earl of Derby, the Conservative leader and statesman), first at the General Election in that year, and, secondly, at a by-election in December, 1830, on Lord Stanley's acceptance of the office of Chief Secretary for Ireland. Beaten by an immense majority in the first contest, Hunt was strangely enabled to defeat the Minister in his family stronghold, in the second contest, by several hundred votes. But the constituency, of many thousand old freemen, was rotten, and a numerous portion of the electors, being non-resident, could be easily personated, against which Lord Stanley's agents had taken no effective precautions. On that occasion, Mr. Boyle told afterwards, he went to Preston, with another Blackburn Radical, to help Harry Hunt by personating unknown out-

ALDERMAN JAMES BOYLE.

voters, and, between them, the two voted fourteen times, and successfully personated, for Hunt, as many freemen. He worked afterwards in the contest, with his accustomed energy, in fetching up voters who were hanging back. In one instance the man whom he and others were after, a stoker at a factory, was so afraid his visitors would kill him that he hid himself by creeping into the ash-hole underneath the boiler. The polling lasted two or three days, and, when it closed, and it was announced that Hunt was elected and had thrown the powerful Stanley, doubtless James Boyle came back to Blackburn in high feather, to boast, amongst his fellow Radicals, of his substantial contribution to the victory, and of the impunity with which he had carried out his personating plans.

The Reform Act of 1832 constituted Blackburn a borough, electing two Members, and James Boyle thereupon became a prominent party man on the Radical side. Dr. Bowring was his man ; and, whilst the Pilkingtons were the Doctor's most influential supporters, George Dewhurst and James Boyle were most active in "beating up" in Bowring's behalf. They just failed to elect him ; yet they did not give up, for, in three years, when the next election came round, they sent for Bowring again, and fought even more fiercely than before, against the coalition of Mr. Wm. Feilden's Conservatives and Mr. Turner's personal adherents. At these elections the colours of Bowring were green and white A handsome silk banner, of these colours in horizontal bands, with a broad green frilled border, was subscribed for, to be carried at the public nomination. It was afterwards left in charge of Mr. Boyle, and carefully preserved by him. It is now treasured by his son and namesake, Mr. James Boyle, Junior, and is not at all worn or

faded. It bears across the centre, in two lines, the words—

"THE INDEPENDENT

ELECTORS OF BLACKBURN."

This interesting relic, of the two first elections in Blackburn, was brought forth and unfurled again, after an interval of thirty years, in 1865, when a banquet of Liberals was held, at which it had been intended to present to the late Mr. James Pilkington a valuable piece of plate, as a memorial of his long service of the borough in Parliament. The banquet took place in the Town Hall; and at the lower end of the Assembly Room. was suspended this old Bowring flag. The chief orators after the dinner were Mr. John Bright and Dr. Bowring. That was the last visit to the town of the first champion and favourite of the Blackburn Radicals. Dr. Bowring recognised the banner, and, in the beginning of his speech, referred to it with feeling, describing its colours in the phrase "Green as grass and white as snow." Mr. Boyle was one of the old Committee present to meet Dr. Bowring. Mr. Pilkington was absent on account of his wife's death.

I think it would be on the return of Dr. Bowring to Blackburn, as M.P. for Kilmarnock, shortly after the election of 1835, when he was met on Preston New-road and escorted into the town by some thousands of his admirers, that Mr. James Boyle rode a pie bald pony. It was not his own animal, and he never rode a horse in his ordinary habit; but, seeing him mounted, some political enemy informed the Excise authorities, and he was sued for saddle-duty, which he had to pay, for a year, along with a fine, for that single ride. I understand that the saddle which involved him in that mulcture is still kept.

After a few years of indefatigable struggle and striving, James Boyle's outside trade in confectionery increased so that the large shallow square basket, to which reference has been made, was no longer capacious enough to hold the quantity of his wares. The next move was to purchase a spring cart, and either to hire or buy a pony to draw it. With these he could cover his district better and extend his business. An instance of the determination of Mr. Boyle and his wife to keep their trade going, in spite of accidents and difficulties at this period, is remembered. One day Mr. Boyle was stepping into the vehicle when he slipped and bruised or cut his leg near the knee. It was winter time, and there was hard frost. He must have gone on that round notwithstanding his hurt, for the frost got into the wound, causing a swelling of the joint, so that he could not walk, and he was laid up whilst proper means were adopted for healing the injured limb. No one of his children was old enough to drive the spring cart, so Mr. Boyle's wife took his place, and went out with the cart and served the customers in the outlying places until he was fit to resume the journeys. As soon as William, the eldest boy, grew big enough, he assisted his father in that branch of the business.

When the Anti-Corn-Law League was formed, to agitate for the repeal of the Corn-Tax, with its headquarters at Manchester, James Boyle not only joined the League himself, but enrolled some of his elder children, male and female, as members. The cards of membership, with an engraved picture of four gaunt figures representing a starving family upon it, are still preserved amongst Mr. Boyle's papers, and with them his large ticket for a great Conference and meeting, which Mr. Boyle attended, as one of the

delegates of the Blackburn branch of the League. This would be about 1842 or 1843. The Free Traders or "Cobdenites," as their opponents styled them, were numerous and active in Blackburn, and they got up several large meetings, at which the orators of the League delivered addresses. The local Chartists fiercely opposed the Free Traders, and at one Anti-Corn-Law League meeting, in the Theatre, the Chartists mustered in force, and carried an amendment declaring "that the repeal of the Corn-Laws would be detrimental to the interests of the working-man"

In the years 1843-1844 came the great movement for railway extension in the country, which grew into the mania of 1845. The lines from Blackburn to Preston, and to Darwen and Bolton, were constructed by local Companies whose shares were very largely taken up by Blackburn people. James Boyle had faith in railways, and he took shares in the Blackburn and Bolton Company, whose offices were in this town. He had saved a few hundreds of pounds, or thought he could spare them out of his trading capital. The venture all but ruined him. The Bolton line cost, as other railroads did, much more money to make and work than had been estimated. The calls upon shareholders were frequent, and many townspeople who had invested were hard put to it to meet these calls. One of the calls James Boyle could not raise, try as he would. His business had been drained to the last pound. His friends were unable to lend him any money. For once in his life he felt that he was fast, and left without resource. But John Catlow, who was opposed to Mr. Boyle in politics, being a Tory, and whom Mr. Boyle would not have thought of asking for a loan, though he bought his provender from Mr. Catlow and was on neighbourly terms, came one day to

the shop, bringing £50, which he offered to lend without security or interest, to enable him to meet the calls on railway account. Mr. Boyle rather hesitated to accept the kind offer, but his wife persuaded him to take the £50. The sum sufficed to tide him over the crisis, and the depression in the cotton manufacture, which had been extreme, (it was about the year 1847) began to abate, and with the revival of the staple trade the retail trades also became brisker. James Boyle began to be in funds again, and so soon as he could he repaid John Catlow's loan, with £5 added for interest. But generous John Catlow would not accept the interest, and he came to Mr. Boyle's shop when the latter was not in, and gave the £5 back to Mrs. Boyle, to spend, as he told her, on something for the children.

At the age of 42 or 43, James Boyle began to serve the town as an administrator. He was appointed one of the Town's Improvement Commissioners. They were not an elected body, but were nominated under the Improvement Act. The Commissioners were townsmen of mark, and they carried out important street and sanitary improvements. They purchased the land for the new Market Place, laid it out, and built the Market House. Mr. Boyle was one of the most attentive and useful Commissioners. He had ideas of his own about the government of the town, and was not afraid to advance his proposals and press them. When the other Commissioners were against him, he still stuck to his text, and his pertinacity at times enabled him to get his way. The Improvement Commissioners were constituted in 1847, and remained in office until 1854; but meanwhile, in 1851, the town had been incorporated, and a Municipal Council elected. Mr. Boyle served on the

Committee that arranged for the introduction of municipal institutions, and the transfer of the powers of the Commissioners to the Town Council.

Mr. Boyle's action in regard to a singular occurrence, whilst he was an Improvement Commissioner, is an example of his vigilance and energy as an administrator when prompt measures became needful. A man named Chadwick, a rate collector, was accused, or suspected, of having levied and collected, or attempted to collect, an illegal rate, the proceeds to be applied to making good some deficit in his accounts. James Boyle got wind of the matter, and got hold of one of the bogus rate-papers which a Mr. Ibbotson had received, and proceeded with the proper measures for dealing with the delinquent rate-collector. A warrant was issued, for his arrest, which the constable (the late P.C. Wallbank) had orders to serve upon Chadwick, but could not gain admission to his domicile for the purpose. Chadwick lived in Bolton Road, and had barricaded himself in his house. Mr. Boyle knew of this. He had been to Darwen, with his van, on the day when the writ was waiting to be served, and driving through Nova Scotia on his return, he observed that the front window of Chadwick's house was open to admit air into the room. Mr. Boyle drove quickly into the town, saw the constable, and told him that Chadwick had opened his window, and that he must make haste to the spot, and get through the window before it was closed again. The officer obeyed Mr. Boyle's directions, went to Bolton Road, found the window of Chadwick's house still open, entered, and served the warrant.

Somewhere near the time when he was an Improvement Commissioner, Mr. James Boyle became a Guardian of the Poor. In that capacity he was equally busy and vigorous,

as in others. He would see what was going on, and nothing that looked like abuse could escape his sharp sight. His watchfulness, sometimes prompted by suspicion, might not endear him to the staff of officials and servants to the Guardians', but no one ventured to charge him, as other Guardians were accused, with corrupt practices. Before me is an old squib, in the form of a printed placard, undated, which refers to matters talked about by the gossips of forty years ago. It is subscribed "An Old Servant in the Workhouse," and pretends to be a revelation of scandalous proceeding at the Workhouse. The writer's stories affect two Guardians, well-known public men of the period (both included in my Characters). One story is about "Goose Eating at the Workhouse last Christmas Day." "A goose there was, and cooked too;" a Guardian, who said he had ordered the goose, ate a leg. But Mr. James Boyle, another Guardian present at the Inmates' Christmas feast, was not to be tempted by parish roast-goose. "Mr. Boyle," the writer of the squib testifies, "did not taste goose or any other kind of meat at the Workhouse. The Governor and others at dinner invited him to dine with them, but he refused, and said he had just dined of goose before he came from home. He had four children with him, he said, to see the pauper children eat their Christmas dinner, and to hear them sing, and recite their pieces." Now-a-days, it is not deemed so improper for Guardians and others to be guests at the Governor's table at a Christmas dinner in the Workhouse, and to partake of any dish on the table, including roast-goose, I dare say; but apparently public opinion in Blackburn, forty years ago, was purist, or was it that scandal-mongering was more encouraged then than now?

In 1851, Mr. Boyle was elected a Councillor for St. Mary's Ward, in the first Town Council of the newly created Municipal Borough of Blackburn. As an old Commissioner, he knew all about town's business, and he was at once conceded a leading part in the Town Council. He interested himself particularly in the Lamp Committee, of which he was chairman for some years, and in the Fire Brigade. To Mr. Boyle we owe the introduction into this town, if not the invention, of the facile method of lighting the street lamps by means of a small lamp fixed upon a long rod, with an attachment for turning on and off the tap of the gas-light. Previously the lamplighter had to carry a heavy ladder with him and mount it, at every lamp he lit, and the time he took in completing his round was very much longer than it is now, and the work vastly more tiring and dangerous in the liability to accident with the ladders. At serious fires, Mr. Boyle was conspicuous for his great energy and experienced skill in directing the firemen. Elderly readers will remember the boiler explosion at the Eagle Foundry, in November, 1853, by which eight persons were killed. It was near Mr. Boyle's shop, and he was first at the spot, and worked hard, along with the firemen, in extricating the bodies from the ruins.

Gas was supplied in Blackburn, forty years since, at 4/6 per thousand feet. Mr. Boyle contended that it ought to be cheaper, and he headed an agitation to bring down the price. In August, 1853, a requisition for a public meeting, to discuss the gas question, was signed by nearly all the larger consumers. The meeting was held in the Old Assembly Room, Heaton Street. A material reduction in the charge of gas was thus obtained.

Mr. Boyle's first term as Town Councillor was for two

years. He was re-elected in 1853. He again offered himself, in St. Mary's Ward in 1856, and was returned; but that year there was an election of Aldermen, and his party being then the majority, Mr. Boyle was appointed an Alderman. It was in 1853 that the Liberals gained the upper-hand in the Town Council, as Mr. Tiplady, who was a Conservative, lamented in his "Journal." The Municipal elections, in November of that year, he records, were riotous; "the Liberals won every seat," he adds, "and the Conservatives are so disgusted that they will contest the point no longer." During the reign of the Liberals in the Council, which lasted without a serious check until 1860, and closed in 1861, Mr. James Boyle was really the dominating spirit. The party had, indeed, its wealthier and socially more exalted figure-heads, but it was James Boyle who managed things behind the scenes, by virtue of his peculiar assertiveness and strength of character. The Conservative minority did not accept Mr. Boyle's mastery meekly; minorities seldom do; but they did not oppose it very resolutely for several years, until they began to see a chance of ousting the Liberals. In the Council meetings, at this period, Alderman Boyle was to the front in speaking, but he did not make long speeches. Sounding orations were not in his line; but short, curt, emphatic statements, and retorts upon assailants, were always ready. No doubt a public man, whose own *forte* in opposition has been to show up incompetency and abuse, loses some of his effectiveness when he finds himself in command, and Alderman Boyle was scarcely so formidable in defence, and in replying to awkward questions, as he had been in attack and in questioning others. But he was fully as capable an administrator as he had before been a searching

critic; and many useful measures in the Council, and movements in the town, could be traced to Mr. Boyle's initiative.

The prolonged litigation of the firm of Eccles, of Wensley Fold Mills, against the Blackburn Corporation, was the outcome of the first disposal of the town's sewage undertaken by the Corporation—the Wensley Fold outlet and tanks for intercepting the sewage. It commenced in 1857, and was not ended until 1859. Messrs. Eccles claimed £80,000 as compensation, for trespass upon their land, and damage, by flooding, to the contents of their mills. A trial at the Assizes in 1857 ended in a reference to arbitration, the costs to be paid by the Corporation. A sub-committee having bungled the matter, the Town Council appointed Alderman Boyle and Councillor John Smith to act for the Corporation in the arbitration. The arbitration was naturally made the most of by Counsel retained on both sides, who knew their pay was sure, and who were as greedy as the horse-leech. Mr. Boyle and his colleague had to contend against the lawyers, and the arbitrator, himself a barrister, did not help them to save expense. But they, at least, succeeded in disproving the allegations of damage by the claimants, and the award was against the latter, for they got but one farthing damages. The costs were enormous, some £16,000 it was stated. Mr. Boyle, on that occasion, had to neglect his own business, and to spend weeks at a time in London. His Town Clerk, Mr. Henry Seward, was a Cockney, a man the Cockneys would call a "rummy old cove." He was a pretty smart solicitor, but the trouble was to keep him straight in the evenings, after the sittings were over. Old Seward knew well the haunts of profligacy in London. The money to

pay current charges was in the Town Clerk's hands. One night when Mr. Seward had £600 of ratepayers' money on his person, Mr. Boyle and Mr. Smith lost sight of him. At a late hour they started from their hotel in search of the lost Town Clerk, being in great anxiety about the cash. They would never have found Seward if he had not afforded them some inkling of his habits and places of resort. Their quest ended, fortunately, in the discovery of Mr. Seward in certain supper-rooms in a cellar, in company with a person of the other sex, whom I can only designate as not his wife (he was a bachelor or widower). Mr. Boyle and Mr. John Smith laid hands on the derelict Town Clerk, and pulled him out of the place. He was already "screwed," but they were much relieved when they found that the £600 in bank notes were safe in his breast pocket. An hour later he would probably have been robbed of the whole of the money, for he had evidently intended to make a night of it. Other tales might be told of those rollicking days (gone, no more to return, to Blackburn Corporate officials, for an era of civic virtue has supervened), but I must desist. In 1862, Mr. Boyle finished his six years' term as an Alderman, and was not re-elected. The Conservatives had recovered sway, and put six of their own number in the Aldermanic seats that November. Mr. Boyle then withdrew from the Town Council. He might have been Mayor before the Liberals lost their majority, but he had no wish for that honour.

The distress amongst the operatives, deprived of their occupation by the Cotton Famine, in 1862-64, afforded Mr. James Boyle an opportunity for the display of his remarkable capacity in organising and directing a system of public relief on a large scale. His confectionery business was

slack, so he undertook, for the Relief Committee, the making and distribution of soup, bread, and other articles of food, at the great central soup-kitchen in the sheds of the mill in Cleaver-street, popularly called the "Puff and Dart." Mr. Boyle lent the huge pans in which the soup was boiled, and, for many months, personally superintended the preparation and distribution. I visited the soup-kitchen on the opening-day, and afterwards, and remarked the complete and orderly arrangement. The soup was good and toothsome, and, with bread, it formed the daily dinner of some thousands of operatives so long as the distress continued. When Richard Cobden, the "Apostle of Free Trade," came to Blackburn to meet the Relief Committee and to see in operation the various means employed for feeding, employing, and educating the operatives, Mr. Boyle, as an old admirer of Cobden, could not resist the impulse to get up a little demonstration in his honour. He got together some hundreds of the "shilling a day men," formed them into a column in military style, and marched them to the railway station, to salute Mr. Cobden on his departure. This incident gave offence to a few Conservatives, who thought it had a party-political significance which Mr. Boyle had never meant. The Vicar, Dr. Rushton, and other leading townsmen had, however, without regard to political differences, paid marked respect to Mr. Cobden while he was in Blackburn, as right-minded men are always ready to do to distinguished Englishmen who may not belong to the same party as themselves.

In May, 1862, when the distress caused by the dearth of cotton and the stoppage of mills in Blackburn was increasing rapidly, Mr. Charles Tiplady wrote a letter to the London *Times*, appealing to public charity for Blackburn operatives,

which was inserted, and, as a result, a considerable sum of money was sent to Mr. Tiplady by benevolent persons, for distribution. Alderman Boyle, at the Town Council meeting, referred to Mr. Tiplady's letter, and censured the latter severely for having taken the cause out of the hands of the Mayor and the Relief Committee, who were the proper parties to determine when the distress had become too great to be relieved by the large funds locally subscribed, and when the appeal to the country for aid should be issued. Mr. Tiplady rejoined in a letter to the local Press, addressed to the operatives, whom he invited to say if he had not done right in begging for them outside, without waiting to see if the Mayor took that step when he thought it necessary. In this passage of arms between Mr. Boyle and Mr. Tiplady, each had supporters of these opposing views amongst the townspeople.

At the end of the Cotton Famine, when the Relief Committee brought its lengthened labours to a close, a balance of its funds was spent in giving a good feast to some 3,000 of the people who had been receiving relief. Mr. Boyle was invited to tender for the cooking and service of these dinners, to celebrate the general resumption of work and he did so. He undertook the whole affair, and it was a big matter this of feeding a multitude on something more bountiful than loaves and small fishes. On each of four days, from 600 to 700 persons, at a sitting, were served with a dinner of roast beef, potatoes, and plum pudding. The allowance of beef was 1½lbs. for every man who dined, and rather less for the women.

In the shop and premises in Salford, a low two-storey brick building, where Mr. Boyle had served his time with William Hodgson, James managed to carry on his ever-growing

confectionery business about 44 years, from 1824, or so, to 1867. He might have bought the shop at different times for £1,000, but did not consider that it was worth so much, and, at the rent he paid, he was content to remain a tenant, having a lease for three lives on the premises. At length the owner, knowing that the three neighbouring brewers wanted the property, had it sold by auction. The bidding was very spirited, and, towards the last, lay between Messrs. Dutton and Co., who desired to make a second approach to their brewery out of Salford, and Mr. George Walmsley, who was understood to be commissioned by Messrs. Shaw and Co. The shop was knocked down to Messrs. Dutton and Co. for £5,760. The purchasers wished to take possession, and then discovered that Mr. Boyle had a running lease; and they gave him £600 to surrender this lease. He had anticipated the sale, and probable demolition of his Salford premises, and had previously built the block of shops in the Market-square at the lower end of Victoria-street, and one he opened as a confectioner's shop, where the business of seventy years' standing is still prosperously carried on. Having added the wholesale trade in preserved fruits to that in confectionery, he built the extensive works in Simmons-street for the purpose. Those works had not been long completed when, at the Municipal Election in 1868, a rumour was abroad that several Conservative voters in St. Paul's Ward were "bottled" and locked up in Mr Boyle's Works, to prevent them from voting. A mob of partizans gathered in front of the works, and threatened to burst open the doors and ransack the rooms, but Mr. Hornby, the present borough Member, was brought to the scene, and he was assured by Mr. Boyle's son that no voters were secreted in the building.

Mr. Hornby was invited to enter and look round the premises to satisfy himself that no voter of his was within (he was contesting that ward). Mr. Hornby accepted the invitation, and a riotous attack and destruction of property were thus prevented.

It would be sometime in 1869, if I am not mistaken, Mr. Boyle was given to understand that he would be appointed a Borough Magistrate. His name had been sent up, with that of his old friend, Dr. Grime, and others, and had been approved. He had been congratulated on the recognition of his long and varied service to the town by both Liberal and Conservative friends. But by the secret efforts of somebody who got at the Chancellor of the Duchy, and, by false representation of Mr. Boyle's position, influenced his mind against Mr. Boyle, the appointment was not completed. He could never have sat upon the Bench, for he was invalided and partially paralysed on one side, but it pained him, and still more his family, that the recognition of his public career should have been thus withheld.

Mr. Boyle was short and stout. In a double sense —bodily and in character—he was hard-headed and stiff-backed. The burdens he had borne in his early manhood may well have contributed to make him physically erect and strong. He had a singularly well-developed and fine head, and a good face, the index of his mental qualities. His individuality was strong. He was the typical English "man of the people," who "knows his rights," and, knowing, dares maintain; who would before the highest, before Kings and Princes, be respectful and fearless. The only thing connected with a poor man's lot he could not endure was laziness. His own working hours, for half his life, began

at four o'clock in the morning, and ended when his allotted work was done, not before, no matter how late the hour. Such a man cannot be kept down ; he is bound to rise and to conquer adverse conditions, if his health holds. One of his characteristics was, in any special business he undertook, to plunge into it with his utmost force and momentum and rush it through. He saw the value of spectacular display in moving a crowd. He was one of the first movers of the Infirmary project, and in the Blackburn subscription to the Patriotic Fund. When the latter was afoot, a waxwork exhibition in Park School was drawing poor audiences. He got the proprietor to give a night for the Benefit of the Patriotic Fund. Mr. Boyle then mustered the firemen and lamplighters, got out the disused pitch torches of the fire brigade, hired the fife and drum band, and, with these materials, marshalled a striking torch-light procession to Park School, followed by thousands of people, who crowded into the wax-work exhibition until the large room was crammed, and hundreds could not get in. Of course the Benefit yielded a handsome sum. That was James Boyle's method of making things succeed. His sons in that respect are "chips of the old block." Five of them, at one time, were members of the Volunteer Fire Brigade, and his son's (Mr. James's present of a bridescake of monumental magnitude for Lord Cranborne's marriage was an instance of a talent for carrying out a bold a design, inherited from the father. I could write much more about Mr. James Boyle. His portrait in the Council Chamber, presented by his family, is a speaking likeness, and one of the best pictures in the Chamber. Mr. Boyle's last illness commenced in February, 1873, and on his birthday, Tuesday night, October 21st of that year, he was seized with

apoplexy, and died two days after, October 23rd, 1873. He had just completed his 69th year. Mr. Boyle had made a substantial competency; and his family have prosecuted, since his death twenty years ago, the several businesses which he successfully established.

XVIII.—DR. JAMES BARLOW, SURGEON.

UNLIKE any other of my "Characters," the subject of the present sketch did not belong to the generation immediately preceding that of the townsmen at present engaged in the affairs and traffic of Blackburn. Generations, indeed, are not distinctly separated, but are so blent and intermingled that one cannot tell when one generation goeth and another cometh. But a man, whose life began about a century and a quarter since, and closed over fifty years ago, must be placed two full generations behind the middle-aged inhabitants of the town at this day. He was the contemporary of the grandfathers of those native citizens who are aged from forty to sixty years, or so. I refer to James Barlow, "gentleman" and surgeon, who was, during a period of forty years, or thereabouts, one of the most skilful surgical operators and practitioners in Blackburn, and a "Character" of some singularity and individuality. Dr. Barlow, I did not personally know, he having died before the beginning of my time in this neighbourhood, but I have heard several things about him, and, some years ago, a quantity of family papers and some old deeds, in possession of a member of the family from which Dr. Barlow sprang, were lent to me (or, as to the deeds, examined by me), and thus I am able to write some particulars respecting the remarkable Dr. Barlow of whom elderly townsmen used to talk.

James Barlow was born at Critchley Fold, in Tottington, a few miles beyond the southern boundary of Blackburn Parish and Hundred. His father, William Barlow, of Critchley Fold, was a yeoman, who lived upon and farmed his small freehold estate of land. James was his second son. His elder brother, John Barlow, succeeded William, his father, on the freehold and lived there, or at the Lower Crow Trees Farm, in Entwistle, which also belonged to him, and still belongs to his descendants, or did a few years ago. Dr. Barlow, in his mature years, interested himself greatly in his ancestors, and claimed that his paternal branch of Barlow was an offshoot from the ancient knightly house of Barlow, of Barlow Hall and Manor, near Manchester, one of the important territorial families of Lancashire, conspicuous, ages back, in the annals of the County Palatine. I have gone carefully into the evidences of the Barlows, of the chief and elder line and of the collaterals, and do not find the link of connection at all plain; but Dr. Barlow had good ground for belief, if not positive proof, that he did descend from the ancient lords of Barlow. In 1826, Dr. Barlow was in correspondence, respecting his pedigree, with William Radclyffe, Esq., of the Heralds' Office, in London; and the following letter, which I have transcribed from a manuscript copy of that sent, contains the Doctor's statement of what he had then learnt about his progenitors :—

"Spring Mount, near Blackburn,

"November 28th, 1826.

"Sir,—I am in possession of a Pedigree of my family, of Barlow Hall, near Manchester, up to the period you mention, from a Visitation made by Dugdale and certified by Thomas Barlow, Esq., in the year 1664. This Thomas Barlow was, I believe, my great-grandfather, and he who sold Barlow Hall to the Egertons, the present possessors,

about the year 1785, was his descendant. This Thomas Barlow had two sons, Thomas and John, who about that time came to reside twelve miles north of Manchester: John at a place called Critchley Fold, and Thomas at Bottoms Hall. John died without issue, and left his estate to his brother [Thomas], my grandfather, whom I well remember. He married and left issue one son and three daughters. He died about 45 years ago. His son, William Barlow, who was my father, married Catherine Taylor; their issue were two sons and one daughter, and I am the youngest of the three—at present a bachelor. My sister and brother have each several children. (The Will of Alexander Barlow, grandson of Sir Alexander, was proved in the Prerogative Office in London in the year 1655.) My father died in the year 1815; his Will, together with those of all the collateral branches of the family, was proved at Chester. This is the chief information which I am at present in possession of.

"JAMES BARLOW."

Having studied for the profession of a surgeon, and qualified, Mr. James Barlow commenced practice in Chorley. I find him engaged there soon after the year 1790. In Blackburn, after he settled here, and during all the rest of his life, Dr. Barlow passed as a bachelor. Indeed, he expressly speaks of himself, in the letter printed above, as being "at present a bachelor." Yet, as a matter of fact, he had married over thirty years prior to that time, whilst he resided in Chorley; for I have met with the notification of his marriage:—"1795. July 7. At Chorley, Mr. James Barlow, surgeon, to Miss Winstanley." A member of his family confirmed this, and informed me that he did marry a Miss Winstanley, at Chorley, but that the marriage was not a happy one, and the parties, after living but a short time together, separated, there being no issue. It was known to scarcely any of Dr. Barlow's acquaintance in Blackburn that he had ever entered into marriage. He always passed as a bachelor, and something of a rake; but on this matter I may not enlarge.

As nearly as I can make out, Dr. Barlow removed from Chorley to Blackburn a little before the end of last century. His quarrel and parting with his wife may have led to his change of abode and place of practice. He was a young man, rather over thirty then, and known in his profession as a bold and skilful hand in difficult surgical cases and critical operations. Dr. Barlow contributed reports of some of his more remarkable cases to the periodicals of the profession, in the period from 1800 to 1820. In 1822, he collected these accounts, and others equally particular, from his records of practice, and published them in a volume, of 417 octavo pages. It has the title "*Essays on Surgery and Midwifery; with Practical Observations, and Select Cases.* By JAMES BARLOW, Surgeon. London, 1822." This volume is dedicated: "As a testimony of esteem and friendship," to Dr. Haworth (a Blackburn man, I think), Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, and Physician to St. Bartholomew's Hospital; Sir Astley Cooper, Bart., F.R.S., and John Abernethy, F.R.S., &c. It bears the imprint of "T. Rogerson, Printer, Blackburn." The preface is dated, "Blackburn, January, 1822." The book is for the use of the faculty only; but it describes Dr. Barlow's performance of what is known to surgeons as the "Cæsarian operation" in three instances: one at Blackrod in 1793; the second at Blackburn, in 1817; and the third at Blackburn, in 1821. In the second instance, Dr. Barlow was assisted by Dr. Cort (the elder), and in the third the late Dr. Dugdale, father of Mr. Adam Dugdale, had charge of the case, and had called Dr. Barlow in for consultation. Dr. James Chew also assisted. Dr. Dugdale's notes are quoted, in which he refers to Dr. Barlow as his "friend and late preceptor." Mr. Dugdale had studied surgery and acquired a knowledge

of its practice under Dr. Barlow. He was a young man who had commenced practice on his own account in 1821.

The physicians and surgeons of Blackburn, when Dr. Barlow was practising from 1800 to 1839, included Dr. Hull ; Dr. Abraham Chew, who died in 1819 ; (his bust is fixed to the east wall of St. John's Church, and there is a duplicate of it at the old Gas Works, of which he was one of the founders) ; Dr. James Chew ; Dr. Joseph Lancaster (who was also a cotton spinner at Wensley Fold) ; Dr. Briggs ; Dr. Bailey ; Dr. John Cort (father of Drs William and Arthur Cort) ; Dr. Martland ; Dr. Stocks ; Dr. James Pickop ; Dr. Dugdale ; and Dr. Skaife. To several of these contemporaries Dr Barlow refers in his book. *e.g.*, Dr Cort, Dr. James Chew, Dr. Dugdale, Dr. Briggs, Dr. Bailey, and Mr. Meanley, his pupil. Dr. James Chew published, in 1795, a dissertation, in Latin, on affections of the mind, written by him for his graduation as Doctor of Medicine at Edinburgh. I happen to have the copy, of this scarce local pamphlet, from Dr. Barlow's library, given to him by the author, Dr. James Chew, who has written his name upon the title page—"*Mr. Barlow.*"

Dr. Barlow's residence, for a considerable period, was the old house of the Whiteheads, Bank House, off Duke's Brow. It is not likely that he would take that house on his first coming to the town to practice. The Bank estate was advertised to be let in 1809, and Dr. Barlow may have taken the house then. He held it as tenant of the Whiteheads, the owners. It was while in that house that he established his large and lucrative practice, and gained his celebrity as a surgeon. When the Preston New Road was in process of construction, in 1824-1825, Dr. Barlow purchased, from the then representative of the Whitehead

family, a piece of land abutting upon the south side of the new road, and upon it he built for himself a house, to which, with the situation, he gave the name of Spring Mount That residence was completed and occupied by Dr. Barlow in 1826. It bears that date, with the initials of the builder, "J.B." cut upon a stone inserted in the wall above the front door, and the stone also has carved upon it the arms and crest of the Lancashire Barlows, granted to the lords of Barlow, which Dr. Barlow claimed and assumed. The house is the old portion of the buildings of the Girls' High School and, adjoining, in the grounds which surrounded the original house, the new buildings of the High School have been erected. Trinity Wesleyan Church also stands upon a portion of the grounds; and the house on the west side of Montague Street, just below the Wesleyan Church, was built upon the remainder of the land purchased by Dr. Barlow, either by him or by his successor, in the ownership of the property. An article in the *Blackburn Times* of February 27th, 1891, on the "Cutting of Preston New Road through the Bank Estate," contained letters of Dr. Barlow and Mr. William Cross, agent to Mrs Whitehead, respecting the parcel of land which the Doctor wanted as a site for a house. One, dated Bank, December 5th, 1824, refers to the price to be paid. Dr. Barlow says the price of land in Blackburn, equally eligible, is on the average what he hinted at on Friday. "Four acres of land were lately offered for sale by Mr. Cardwell and bought by Mr Feilden at a little more than £300 per acre, which is nearer the town and quite eligible for building upon, and of the best quality. Allow me to inform you that the greater part of the half-acre of land which I am wishful to purchase from you, below the Bank, is quite boggy, and could not be

made suitable to build upon. On the other part I should erect a cottage for my own residence, and the swampy part I would drain and plant with shrubs, &c. The land, generally speaking, is as valuable as most about the town, and I wish to pay a fair price for what I purchase. Let me then request you to fix your price, and let me know without delay, as I am limited to time respecting other offers." Spring Mount was the first large house built upon the line of Preston New Road after its construction. In it Dr. Barlow lived thirteen years, from 1826 until his death.

Dr. Barlow had literary and antiquarian, as well as artistic, tastes. He formed an extensive library, particularly of books relating to his profession, but the bulk were works of history, topography, science, philosophy, and general literature. I have, in my library, a number of books which once were Dr. Barlow's, and have his armorial book-plate inserted. I purchased these at the sale of the collection after Mr. Sturdy's death. Several of them are curious, and indicative of his lines of reading.

It has been mentioned that Dr. Barlow was concerned in the ancient family of Barlow, from which he believed himself derived. When a young man, being in Manchester on one occasion, he chanced to see and secure a valuable and interesting relic of that family. It was the lost portrait of Sir Alexander Barlow, Knight, who died in 1620, and it had been painted in 1616, the date which it bears. The portrait, a large oil painting, was sold at the sale of the household effects at Barlow Hall, not long after the death of Thomas Barlow, Esq., in 1773; and, for a time, it disappeared. Indeed, its whereabout was unknown until I saw it at Spring Mount and reported the discovery in a paper contributed to *Local Gleanings*, a county archæological magazine, in May,

1880. I extract a sentence or two from that article :—" Dr. Barlow discovered the original picture of Sir Alexander Barlow amongst the stock of an old picture dealer in Manchester. The dealer knew the painting was curious, and put a good price upon it, which, however, Dr. Barlow paid. He had an engraving or etching of the picture executed upon copper. The picture is in an antique frame of oak, with richly-carved mouldings." For a time this quaint portrait of a Lancashire Knight, of the reign of James the First, was lent to the Free Library Committee, and was hung in the hall of the Free Library. The late Mr. John Eglington Bailey, F.S.A., of Manchester, had a drawing made by a Manchester artist, from which he got an excellent engraving on wood for his "Palatine Note Book."

In the year 1808, was born, in Blackburn, a child in whom Dr. Barlow took a paternal interest. The infant, a boy, was christened "James Barlow Stewardson Sturdy." Dr. Barlow took upon himself the charge of the boy's education, with the intention of making him his heir. This he eventually carried into effect. He was placed with an attorney in the town, to learn the profession of the law, and, after qualifying, he became a member of a firm of solicitors in Blackburn. Mr. Sturdy married a sister of the late Mr. Daniel Thwaites, and was, for a quarter of a century, a townsman of position. He entered the Town Council, and served the office of Mayor in 1862-1863. When I first remember him, Mr. Sturdy resided in the house previously mentioned, adjacent to Spring Mount, near the upper end of Montague Street. The late Mr. William Eccles then occupied Spring Mount. Later, Mr. Sturdy himself lived at Spring Mount (which, with other property in Blackburn, and the bulk of his wealth, he had inherited at Dr. Barlow's death), and there he died,

aged 58 years, on February 8th, 1867. Mrs. Sturdy and her daughters continued to reside at Spring Mount while Mrs. Sturdy lived. A portrait and a bust of Dr. Barlow, and a number of articles which had belonged to him, were shown to me by Mrs. Sturdy more than twelve years ago.

In January, 1839, a tremendous wind-storm swept over this part of Lancashire, and blew down many chimneys and projecting portions of buildings in Blackburn. Dr. Barlow's house at Spring Mount was considerably damaged by the fall, through the roof to the ground floor, of a heavy chimney-stack hurled down by the hurricane. Dr Barlow and other inmates had left the house shortly before, and so escaped injury.

Dr. Barlow died, aged 72 years, on the 20th of August, 1839, at his residence, Spring Mount. The obituary characterises him as having been "a celebrated and talented surgeon," and adds that "he will be long remembered and deeply regretted by an extensive circle of friends, and by numbers who have benefited by the exercise of his professional skill." The remains of this eminent old Blackburn surgeon were buried in the Churchyard of the Blackburn Parish Church, August 27th, 1839. The newspaper account of his funeral states that twelve carriages followed the hearse, and that among the chief mourners were: The Vicar, Rev. Dr. Whittaker; Mr. William Feilden, M.P.; and Mr. Joseph Feilden, of Witton Hall. "The road from Spring Mount to the Churchyard was thronged by thousands of people, many of whom had benefited by the gratuitous exercise of the skill of the deceased." The monument erected over Dr. Barlow's grave is inscribed with the following epitaph:—"To the Memory of JAMES BARLOW, Esq., who died August 20th, 1839, aged 72 years.

In character he was amiable, charitable, benevolent, particularly towards the poor, for whom he gratuitously exercised his professional skill as a practitioner, especially in surgery. He was learned, sagacious, experienced, and successful. His loss was sincerely deplored by all who knew him."

An interesting personal relic of Dr. Barlow has passed through two or three hands since he died, and is now in the possession of Mr. James Boyle. It is a small but pretty snuff-box, made of tortoise shell, mounted and hinged with gold, with the name, "James Barlow," engraved on the top, and it contains the morsel of snuff left in it by Dr. Barlow at his decease

Dr. Barlow's housekeeper at Bank House and Spring Mount, during many years, was Miss Worswick. This lady survived her old master thirty-one years, and lived to the extraordinary age of 92 years. She died on the 9th of April, 1870.

MEMORIAL TO GEORGE ELLIS.

XIX.—GEORGE ELLIS, MUSICIAN.

OF all the men of note Blackburn has produced, or who, born elsewhere, have accomplished their work in this town, during the past century, not one was more dear to the hearts of Blackburn people than George Ellis. They gloried in him for his rare musical gifts, interpretative and executive, amounting to genius hitherto equalled by no man or woman born and bred in the community; but they loved him for his genial spirit and his brilliant triumphs as a bandmaster; for his homely manners and plain style, in figure and in dress, as of a Lancashire man sprung from the common people and unaltered by outside polish; and for the generosity with which he constantly gave his valuable services to local charitable objects. In George Ellis there was no grotesqueness in aspect, action, or speech. His outward man was a combination of quietness, simplicity, and natural ease and dignity. Sparing in words, he spoke his conceptions and feelings in the strains of faultless music, which flowed and fell in a cascade of "liquid silvern notes," when he raised the cornet to his lips.

George Ellis was born, in Blackburn, on the 11th of February, 1817, and received his schooling at the National School in Thunder Alley. In my sketch of the late Mr. Thomas Clough, with whom George Ellis was associated in

musical matters all his life, I quoted a few lines from an account given by Mr. Clough, concerning Ellis's start as an instrumentalist, which may be here repeated; and it is to Mr Clough's well-told recollections that I am beholden for interesting incidents of the earlier chapters of the life-history of George Ellis. Mr. Clough was acquainted with George Ellis's father, "old Robert Ellis," as he was generally called. Robert Ellis was a skilful performer of instrumental music, so that the son's musical faculty and gift were inherited. The father's favourite instrument was the clarionet. "In his early days Robert Ellis travelled with an exhibition through the country, as leader of the band." He came back to Blackburn to settle, perhaps when he married, and opened a grocer's shop. He continued for the remainder of his life in that prosaic but useful retail trade, and brought up his family in the town. He had three sons—George, Henry, and Joseph. The father lived until George, the eldest son, was approaching middle age, and died about 1851 or 1852.

Henry Ellis, the second son, went into trade, and settled in Liverpool, where he became a successful merchant. The other brother, Joseph ("Joe") Ellis, was, like his father and eldest brother, a musician. Mr. Clough knew him as a lad, and has related that "Joe Ellis was a most conspicuous youth for his musical talent." He did not excel in book-learning as a schoolboy. "I well remember," says Mr. Clough, "that he went to the National School in Thunder Alley, now called Town Hall-street. They had the greatest difficulty—nay, found it impossible to teach him to read like other boys, and made complaints to his father. Old Robert Ellis prevailed upon the master to allow his son to bring sheets of music, instead of copy books, to the school;

and there it was that "Joe" Ellis amused himself by arranging difficult sets of quadrilles and hornpipes innumerable. He used to bring them to my office and play them over with his fiddle. They were so difficult that his brother George, much older than Joseph, has repeatedly told me that he could not play them. Yet 'Joe' seemed to play them with ease." Thus Joseph Ellis must have possessed exceptional skill as a violinist. But he did not turn his faculty to so good an account as his brother. He died comparatively young, several years before the eldest brother.

Mr. Thomas Clough established the "Blackburn Choral Society" sometime about or before 1830. It was one of numerous similar societies started to bring together the hand-loom weavers of Lancashire and Yorkshire, many of whom are musically bent, and to cultivate their knowledge and practice of the art. The choirs of the churches and chapels were composed mainly of these peasant singers and players; of the latter—before organs became common in the country churches and the town and village chapels—there were performers on the "bass fiddle," the violin, the clarionet, and other instruments. When the Blackburn Choral Society had been pursuing its course a short time, old Robert Ellis took his son George to the place of meeting and applied for the boy's admission as a player of the violin. Mr. Clough was in want of more instrumentalists, and took him on; but George was then so little that he had to stand on a box in order to see the music from which he had to play, so he stood by the side of the conductor, Mr. Clough. George Ellis soon acquired creditable proficiency on the fiddle, for his age; and then he turned to the cornopean and other brass instruments, which suited him better than the violin. On these, says Mr.

Clough, after three years diligent practice, "he became so proficient that when he practised choruses, where there was a prominent part for a brass instrument, George Ellis laid his fiddle down, and invariably played the brass instrument."

Everyone who was living, thirty to sixty years ago, remembers Wombwell's great travelling menagerie, and what a sensation it created among the inhabitants when it visited Blackburn, about once a year. The inside show of animals always attracted large crowds ; but the outside entertainment, by the splendid band, which could be heard for nothing, was to the full as great a treat to those who knew good instrumental music. On one of these visits Mr. Wombwell heard of the skill of a Blackburn lad, George Ellis, in playing brass instruments. Just then George was under the necessity of deciding whether he would devote himself to instrumental music as his regular occupation or not. He was introduced to Mr. Wombwell, who offered him a place in his band. It was accepted, and George Ellis left the town with the menagerie, and travelled with it for four or five years. He was then still in his teens. In that celebrated band George had the benefit of immense audiences to listen to his music—tens of thousands in every large town. Mr. Clough mentioned that, as a young man, he wondered if he should ever hear the mighty choruses of Handel, Haydn, and Mozart played by brass bands. By Wombwell's band he heard those choruses played "magnificently"; and he remembered "what a grand treat it was to hear the band play one of those choruses." The coming of the menagerie into the town brought scores of local musicians to the exhibition ground, who would stand for hours on a cold winter's night listening to the splendid rendering of the choruses and selections from the operas.

George Ellis, immediately after joining it, became leader of Wombwell's band, and he brought it to the highest perfection it ever attained.

But George Ellis did not like travelling from town to town. He had strong home instincts. Like his father, "his heart, untravelled," remained in Blackburn, and he resigned his position of distinction, with good pay, as Mr. Wombwell's bandmaster, to enable him to settle in his native town, and to marry and become a family man. For his future subsistence he trusted to engagements in the district as a trainer and leader of bands, and his spare time he devoted to the arrangement of music for performance on brass instruments. Mr. Clough made him leader of the Blackburn Choral Society. I find that the first local band of which George Ellis was the leader was the "Blackburn Old Band," in the year 1835. That was when he was only eighteen years old, and before he joined Wombwell's band. It was in 1840 that Mr. Ellis returned to this town to reside, and in that year he appears to have resumed the leadership of the "Old Band." The first of many presents and testimonials to his service was the gift of a cornet, made to Mr. Ellis in Blackburn, in May, 1841. One of the earliest of the bands trained by George Ellis was nicknamed the "Goose" Band. What its proper name was I am not certain.

George Ellis's record, as a teacher of bands in this and other parts of Lancashire, extends over more than thirty years, from 1840 until 1871, the year of his death. In 1852, or earlier, the Blackburn Temperance Band was under his tuition. In the districts round about, he trained each of the successful brass bands formed between 1850 and 1860. Two or three of them achieved almost national

reputation by their repeated demonstrations of superiority in the competitive performances at important public band-contests. I might name the Accrington Band, the Bacup Band, the Haigh Band, and the Enfield Band. The Accrington Band engaged Mr. Ellis to instruct it about the year 1853; and the band gave a concert at Accrington in April, 1854, in which it "astonished the audience by its proficiency." In September, 1854, the Accrington Choral Society and Band, assisted by the Foxhill Band (another of Mr. George Ellis's bands), rendered an overture composed and arranged by Mr. Ellis. On that occasion Mr. Thomas Clough was invited to make a presentation of a gold watch-guard to George Ellis, and of a gold-clasped Church Service to Mrs. Ellis. Mr. Clough on that occasion asserted that "there was scarcely a travelling band of any note in the country but played George Ellis's music." In September, 1855, the Accrington Band took part, with twelve other bands, in a great band contest at Manchester, and gained the first prize. Mr. George Ellis personally took part in the contest with the Accrington Band. He and Mr. Adam Westall performed a duet, arranged for the cornet and ophicleide by Mr. Ellis himself, and the rendering was pronounced splendid. After the contest the then celebrated conductor, M. Jullien, begged to be introduced to George Ellis, and warmly complimented him. The Accrington band visited Blackburn in April, 1856, accompanied by two other local bands taught by Mr. Ellis, and these were joined in the town by the Blackburn Temperance Band. These bands united at the bottom of Church-street, and performed Haydn's chorus, "The Heavens are Telling," and Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus;" and afterwards supped at the Golden Lion Inn. At that date Mr. Ellis was leader

of no fewer than thirteen bands Several Accrington gentlemen joined in making a gift of money to the Accrington Band, in 1857, and George Ellis, its leader, in response to the toast of his health, stated that the band started under adverse circumstances. It had 18 players at first; at the end of a year was reduced to 12, and the next year still lower; yet it had been worked up to be one of the best bands in the provinces.

The history of the Bacup Band, under Mr. George Ellis as instructor, and Mr. James Lord as leader, was as striking as that of the Accrington Band; it was formed at Broadclough in 1855; and in 1864 took the first prize at the annual brass band contest at Belle Vue, Manchester, out of 13 competing bands. George Ellis had prepared the band for that competition. The Bacup band, indeed, was said to be Mr. Ellis's favourite, of all the bands he had trained. Within eight years, from 1862 to 1870, the Bacup Band won 31 first prizes in contests, and the money value of its winnings was reckoned up to nearly £1,500.

Another excellent band, to which George Ellis was for sixteen years bandmaster, was the Haigh (Wigan) Band. In August, 1871, the patrons of the band, headed by the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, subscribed the cost of presenting, to Mr. and Mrs. Ellis, life-size portraits and a purse of £15. The gentlemen who made the presentation referred to two of George Ellis's compositions —"The Lindsay March" and "The Welcome Galop." Mr. Ellis acknowledged the gift in a pleasant little speech, in which he spoke of the difficulty in keeping bands together, or up to the mark, caused by the constant departure of members to other parts of the Kingdom or of the World.

Other gifts at intervals were received by George Ellis from the bands he had taught, or from the public. Amongst them, these :—Blackburn Choral Society, volumes of opera music, in February, 1857; timepiece by Blackburn Temperance Band in March, 1857; books by Bacup Band in January, 1865; silver cornet by Blackburn Artillery Volunteers in June, 1865; gold watch by Band and Non-commissioned Officers of the Blackburn Artillery Corps, in May, 1867; and portrait of himself and gold locket for Mrs. Ellis at Bacup in September, 1870. These tributes were amply earned by patient and persistent labour in the art of rendering the most difficult music upon brass instruments.

George Ellis was a musical composer of recognized power and conception. His dance music was prepared usually for local occasions. I have named two or three of his compositions. Another was the "Oddfellows' Schottische," which was composed for a Ball in aid of the Oddfellows' Widows and Orphans' Fund, held in Blackburn, April 2nd, 1856. Mr. Ellis was the composer of several excellent hymn tunes. One, in particular, named "Southport," is frequently sung in public worship throughout the country, and is a great favourite in Blackburn.

One of the most imposing musical meetings that ever took place in Blackburn was organised by Mr. George Ellis in 1857. Eleven brass bands, all trained by him, came to the town, and marched through the main streets, playing popular airs, to the Corporation Park, on a Saturday afternoon in the summer. On the upper terrace of the Park several of the bands performed selections; and then the whole eleven bands played together four of the grandest choruses of Handel and Haydn, concluding with the

"Hallelujah Chorus" and the National Anthem. George Ellis led throughout, and his son William played solo parts. It was estimated that 50,000 people were in the Park to hear, and the enthusiasm was extraordinary. The players and instruments numbered 149. To mark the public appreciation, one of the Russian guns at the top of the Park was fired, during the afternoon, by Alderman Boyle, with the help of the Blackburn pensioners.

In this town George Ellis was regarded as the king of cornet players, and many hundreds of times did he play and lead, before his fellow-townsfolk, in oratorios, concerts, and all manner of musical entertainments in which brass instruments were called into requisition. On a great number of these occasions his services were given for the benefit of charities. During the cotton famine, for instance, in February, 1863, Mr. Ellis, his two sons, his daughter, and forty other members of the Choral Union, gave a concert in the Town Hall, towards a fund for providing free lectures for the unemployed operatives, to whom 500 free tickets were distributed. George Ellis never played more finely than on that evening. He played in turn the cornet, flageolet, and violin; his son, William Ellis, played the cornet, violin, and pianoforte; his younger boy, Robert, played the cornet and violin; and his daughter, Miss Ellis, aged 14, played the pianoforte. In the summer of 1868, George Ellis, with the Borough Band, gave a series of performances in the Corporation Park, probably the first of such free entertainments on summer evenings. Mr. Clough, in his address, on the unveiling of the Ellis monument in the Cemetery in 1872, mentioned, with respect to the musical education and ability of Mr. Ellis's children, two sons and two daughters, that "the eldest one, William, was

a teacher of bands, and leader of the Darwen Rifle Band; Robert, the other son, was a player in the Borough Band; the eldest daughter, Mary, was a successful teacher of the pianoforte; and the youngest daughter—a little girl, Elizabeth—was also a proficient pianist." Thus the love and practice of instrumental music continued in the third generation of the Ellis family.

George Ellis was a stout man of about middle height; broad-chested and broad-backed; a solid man, with a comfortable air and pleasant face, and placid, shrewd, intelligent expression. As a bandmaster he had the character of strictness in discipline, without which no band of a dozen or twenty men or lads could possibly be well trained, but his force was silent, not passionate. At all times, when standing before an audience, leading his bands or playing solos, he was so disdainful of tricks of display, so undemonstrative, so cool and collected, that his duty, no matter how severe, seemed to demand no effort or strain; but that he greatly overwrought himself, in the discharge of his professional tasks as an instructor of bands, a number of which he prepared and led in exciting contests, must be concluded from the fact that though he was constitutionally a strong, healthy man, his life was prematurely closed.

A great Oddfellows' tea party and ball were held on the evening of Saturday, October 7th, 1871. The Exchange Hall and the Assembly Room of the Town Hall were required for the event. Two of Mr. Ellis's bands, the Blackburn Borough Band and the Haigh Band, were engaged to play the music. Mr. Ellis met the Haigh Band at the Station, and conducted it to the Exchange. He then went home, but, during the evening, he looked in at both halls to assure himself that the musical programme was

proceeding. He was cheerful and appeared to be in moderate health. During the night he slept well, but in the morning (Sunday) at eight o'clock he was seized with paralysis or apoplexy, and died before noon. Twenty-three years have elapsed since his death ; but I remember, as if it were but yesterday, the universal feeling of awe and grief when it became known that George Ellis was dead. He was only 54 years old. His remains were interred at the Blackburn Cemetery on October 12th, and business was suspended whilst the funeral procession passed. Mr. Ellis was a Freemason, and the local Freemasons attended the funeral. The Borough Band, the Bacup Band, and six other bands from neighbouring towns, which Mr. Ellis had instructed, led the procession, and the Bacup Band played the "Dead March" in *Saul.* It was a most impressive scene in the streets and at the Cemetery. The premature loss of so gifted a townsman was felt by all the inhabitants to be indeed a great one.

On July 27th, 1872, the year following George Ellis's death, a monument of appropriate design, erected by his pupils and friends, was unveiled. Seven bands attended, again led by the Bacup and Blackburn Borough Bands, and gave a memorial concert in a field contiguous to the Cemetery. Mr. Thomas Clough, as the first musical preceptor of George Ellis, unveiled the monument and delivered a very interesting address, filled with reminiscences of his distinguished pupil. The monument is conspicuous on the slope in the Church of England portion of the Cemetery. It is in the form of a gothic obelisk, above a canopy with carved capitals supported by red granite columns, between which are carved panels ; on one side is a cornet, wreathed with laurels ; another panel encloses a

scroll of music, on which is engraved a strain from the *Messiah*—"The Trumpet shall Sound"; a third displays a Masonic emblem; and in the front panel is a bust of George Ellis. The inscription on the base reads:—"GEORGE ELLIS, born Feb. 11th, 1817; died Oct. 8th, 1871."

Dr. Henry Ainsworth Grime.

XX.—DR. HENRY AINSWORTH GRIME, SURGEON.

FROM quite a number of friends came the request that Dr. Grime should not be omitted from the list of Blackburn men whose careers and peculiarities I have undertaken to limn. Dr. Henry Ainsworth Grime was decidedly an original, a man alone, and a "character" among "characters" in this town. What townsman or townswoman of standing was not acquainted with Dr. Grime, and knew him for a man who would tell people in the plainest language what he thought, while he could read everybody's foible by a single glance? For forty years he had gone in and out among the inhabitants of Blackburn and neighbourhood, and he understood the physical natures and personal ways and habits of hundreds, aye, thousands, of all social conditions, better than any clergyman, minister, or priest. Of the three doctors of medicine and surgery introduced into this series—Dr. Skaife, Dr. Barlow, and Dr. Grime—Dr. Grime was the only native of the town, though all of them practiced in Blackburn during half a century.

The professions run very much in families. Clergymen's sons recruit the ranks of the clergy. Lawyers' sons take to the law, as naturally as ducklings to water. The sons of

physicians and surgeons are likely to adopt the paternal profession. In Blackburn this has been frequently the case; but some of the doctors, having been bachelors, or "widowers bewitched," left no sons to succeed them. In the last century two or three members of the family of Haworth were doctors in the district, as were two of the old native family of Chew; three of the local family of Pickop and Pickup; two of the family of Lancaster; three of the family of Cort; two of the family of Martland; and there have been three members of the family of Grime who have practiced as surgeons in this town, namely, the first Dr. John Grime, from 1825 to 1849; his nephew, Dr. Henry A. Grime, from 1849 to 1885; and the second Dr. John Grime, until his recent death while suffering from mental depression.

I will prefix to my sketch of Dr. Henry Grime a little information respecting his progenitors, so far as they were connected with Blackburn by residence and trade. Henry Grime, grandfather of my subject, is the first representative of this particular branch of the local clan of Grime whom we can identify with certainty. He lived in Blackburn, and carried on the business of a sizer, at a period when the cotton warps for hand-loom weavers were sent to be sized at the size-houses, of which there were half a score in the town ninety years ago. The size-house of Henry Grime was situated in High Street; the premises extend back towards the house in Mount Street. These Blackburn Grimes are known to have been related to the Darwen Grimes. In Over Darwen this surname might be called indigenous, and is, I think, an abbreviation of that of Grimshaw, which is derived from the local place-name of Grimshaw in the Hoddlesden glen, between Over Darwen, or Eccleshill, and

Yate and Pickup Bank. Henry Grime's birth-date would take us back 130 years or so; and, if he was born after 1762, perhaps his father was "John Grime, of Blackburn," who married Jenny Holden, of Haslingden, at Haslingden Church, January 18, 1762.

By Mary, his wife, Henry Grime, the sizer, had two sons, and probably other issue. The sons were Joseph and John. Joseph was some twelve years older than John, and was born in 1789, or the beginning of 1790. John was born in 1802. While the cotton manufacture upon the old system was developing, the sizers were kept busy, and made considerable gains. Henry Grime must have prospered fairly. When Mount Street Chapel was built, in 1810, for a small body of persons, who seceded from Chapel Street Independent Chapel, Mr. Henry Grime was the chief money-finder; or else he had a mortgage on the chapel. And when the promoters could no longer carry it on as a place of worship, the building passed into the sole possession of Henry Grime, and his widow sold it to the Presbyterians in 1828.

I should here notice, briefly, the younger son of Mr. Henry Grime, sizer, namely, John Grime, who was, in his time, quite as notable a man, in the same profession, as the Dr. H. A. Grime known to most of Blackburn people. John Grime was born in Water Street, September 29th, 1802. His father was able to give him a good education, for he was sent to a school at Gomersal, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. On leaving school, he engaged himself to the elder Dr. Cort to learn the science and practice of surgery, and, after he had served his term, he proceeded to London, and completed his professional studies in St. George's Hospital. He was admitted a Member of the

Royal College of Surgeons in 1825, and the same year returned to Blackburn and commenced practice. He established the surgery in Water Street, where he, and his nephew in succession, practiced during about sixty years, from 1825 to 1885. Dr. John Grime had the repute of being a very skilful and successful surgeon, and he secured extensive practice. His popularity, and perhaps his celebrity were increased by his benevolence toward the poor, whom he treated, in every instance where he ascertained that they could ill afford to pay a doctor's fee, gratuitously. Not content with giving them the benefit of his surgical skill, and dispensing medicine freely to such, he relieved many of them with money and food. His surgery was frequented by multitudes of the humblest. He distinguished himself, during the cholera epidemic of 1832, by immense exertions amongst the large numbers who were attacked. Dr. John Grime did not marry, but lived with his aged mother, Mrs. Mary Grime, in Mount Street. He died in middle-life (in his 47th year), on the 25th of February, 1849. His grave is in the yard of the now forsaken Presbyterian Chapel in Mount Street, and the spot is marked by a monument erected by subscription; it is a massive obelisk of grey granite. To this day the merits and philanthropy of Dr. Grime, uncle of Dr. H. A. Grime, are remembered and spoken of by the townspeople who, in their early years, knew him. I have ascertained that old Mrs. Grime's residence was the end house in Mount Street, opposite the chapel; and there she died, at an advanced age, some 40 years ago.

Joseph Grime, John's elder brother, appears to have been brought up to his father's business of sizing. He married a Miss Ainsworth; she was one of the Ainsworths

of Whitebirk, and had, besides one daughter, two sons, named respectively Henry Ainsworth Grime and James Grime. Joseph Grime died a young man. The *Blackburn Mail* for February 23rd, 1820, contains this item :—"Died, on Saturday evening (Feb. 19th), in the 30th year of his age, Mr. Joseph Grime, eldest son of Mr. Henry Grime, sizer, of Water Street, in this town." The wording of this notice suggests that the father was then (1820) living. The second son of Joseph Grime, Mr. James Grime, when he grew up, learnt the business of a chemist and druggist, and set up a shop in Church Street. By his wife, whose maiden name was Wilson, James Grime had a son John, who was the late Dr. John Grime, surgeon, of Bolton Road, Blackburn. He died within the last two or three years.

Henry Ainsworth Grime was, as stated, the eldest son of Joseph Grime, and he was born in Water Street (at the upper end), where his father lived, on Christmas Day, December 25th, 1816. His father died when he was little more than three years old ; and his Uncle John, the doctor, after he returned from London and began to practice as a surgeon in Blackburn, took charge of the training of his nephew Henry. Henry had to assist in the surgery, and eventually to succeed his uncle, who was unmarried. Henry duly qualified as surgeon and, somewhere about 1840, began to practice, at first in Blackburn, but concluding there was a better opening in Accrington, he opened a surgery there. He was skilful and active, and had secured a respectable connection in Accrington, and another in Great Harwood, where he visited on certain days in the week, when his uncle John died, in 1849. Henry Ainsworth Grime was constituted his uncle's executor and took over his large

practice. In that year, therefore, he returned to Blackburn, and, at the age of thirty-two, entered upon his career as a leading surgeon in the town. Upon his professional life, except as it displayed his characteristics, I need not expatiate. His surgery, in Water Street, as I remember it from 1850, was always "throng" with people waiting their turn to be attended. Many of them had their bones set, their wounds dressed, or their complaints cured, without charge. In the interval of years, after the old Dispensary was closed, and ere the Infirmary was built and opened, there was no public charitable institution in Blackburn for the treatment and relief of injured and sick persons who were too poor to pay for surgical and medical aid. They could only look to doctors of generous disposition, like Dr. Henry Grime and his uncle, Dr. John Grime, for help and cure; and a large proportion of the cases that came to them were of the charitable kind. Dr. Grime was appointed one of the Union medical officers, and, as such, he served the pauper class; but we know that the most deserving of the humbler section of the community will not seek parish relief when misfortune overtakes them, and it was such as these that Dr. Grime received and encouraged to come as free patients, and for them he turned his surgery daily into a private infirmary and dispensary of medicine.

Dr. Grime was a Wesleyan Methodist. I trust my friends of the medical faculty will not be offended if I remark that religion, or, at least, the outward manifestation of religious fervour, is not the strong point of doctors as a body. Perhaps a sense of professional etiquette restrains them from trenching upon the domain of the clerical profession. The cure of bodies and the cure of souls are two distinct functions. In Blackburn I can remember only two or three

medical men who have been Methodists. Dr. Grime was one, and his former pupil, the late Dr. Cheesborough (the son of a Wesleyan Minister), was another. By the way, when he was living and in health, I had more than one pleasant chat with Dr Cheesborough about Dr. Grime, in which he spoke of occurrences in the course of practice at the old Water Street Surgery. The Methodism of Dr. Grime was not merely formal—it was active and zealous. For more than twenty years he was a regular local preacher in the Wesleyan Chapels of the local circuits, and his hearty spirit, shrewd wit, terse speech, and homely illustrations, drawn from his own close observation of the life of the people, made him a very effective and acceptable preacher. I regret that I never heard Dr. Grime preach, but I will quote a few sentences respecting the religious side of the Doctor's character, from notes kindly communicated to me by a Blackburn Wesleyan (Mr. John Marsh). He writes :—"It is 34 years since I became acquainted with Dr. Grime. My first sight of him was as he stood in the pulpit of Clayton-street Wesleyan Chapel (the old chapel). He was then a local preacher, and his name appeared in the Blackburn Clayton Street circuit. He was the first local preacher I heard. I have still a pleasant recollection of that Sunday morning service; with what reverence the doctor-preacher gave out the impressive hymn beginning 'Before Jehovah's awful throne;' how powerfully he expounded the text, 'What is man,' &c. Dr. Grime," Mr. Marsh adds, "maintained his interest in Wesleyan Methodism to the last, and, a few years ago, when the centenary services were held in the present chapel in Clayton Street, Dr. Grime was selected to preside over the public meeting, as representing one of the oldest families, if not absolutely the oldest Wesleyan family, in the

circuit I remember he modestly expressed a wish that some more active worker than he had been appointed to preside over so vast and important a meeting." Dr. Grime always testified for, and acted upon his conviction of, the value of "simplicity of worship, good old-fashioned congregational singing, and plain scriptural preaching." Dr. Grime was a great supporter of Christian missions to the heathens, and he used to preside, year by year, at the annual public missionary meeting of the local branch of the Wesleyan Missionary Society.

As to political matters, Dr. Grime was one of those steady-going Reformers of the old school, content to take moderate doses of remedial physic, at decent intervals. He was never a prominent party manager or organizer, and, at election times, he was not seen in the forefront of the battle. But he served twelve years in the Town Council as a Liberal, from 1853 to 1865. For eight of those years the Liberals were the majority in the Town Council. I suppose that men mostly prefer the party dominant in a local governing body. Those who delight in opposition and attack may be exceptions. Dr. Grime entered the Council as a Councillor for St. John's Ward, in November, 1853. It affords an idea of the disorganization and discouragement of the Conservatives at that period, that they permitted Dr. Grime to go in unopposed for the most Conservative ward in the borough. His Surgery, indeed, was situated on the edge of St. John's Ward, and in the Ward he was well-known and popular. In 1856, when his first term expired, the Conservatives had rallied and were prepared to try and recover St. John's Ward. Dr. Grime, knowing this, did not offer himself again. His colleague was Mr. James Briggs, Innkeeper. Mr. John

Withers, father of Mr. J. Nowell Withers, solicitor, was nominated by the Conservatives for the retiring Doctor's seat, and was elected without a contest. But Mr. James Boyle was directly afterwards made an Alderman, and at the bye-election for St. Mary's ward, on November 14th, 1856, Dr. Grime was returned. A sham contest was caused by the nomination of Mr. Richard Dugdale, Engraver, but he only got 38 votes. Three years later, in 1859, the Conservatives had assumed the aggressive. St. Mary's Ward was strongly contested, and, although Dr. Grime headed the poll and kept his seat, his Liberal colleague, Mr. Joseph Turnbull, was defeated and replaced by Mr. Ellis Duckworth, one of the Conservative candidates. That year (1859) the Liberals carried St. Paul's and Park Wards, and one seat in St. Mary's Ward; the Conservatives carried St. John's, Trinity, and St. Peter's Wards, and one seat in St. Mary's Ward. The election of six aldermen ensued, and Mr. Turnbull was one of five Liberals elected. Aldermen Robert Hopwood died in February, 1860; and Dr. Grime was elected an alderman, in that vacancy. He served nearly six years, until November, 1865, as alderman, and then retired from the Town Council. Dr. Grime's best work in the Municipal administration was done in the sanitary department. He had been made chairman of the Sanitary Committee when he entered the Council in 1853, and he was still holding that post in 1860. In that position his professional experience stood him in good stead. He was ever an energetic sanitarian.

My remaining space I must use in presenting a few incidents which serve to exemplify Dr. Grime's distinctive humour, style of colloquial speech, and method of dealing with human nature as he came in contact with it. His

humour consisted not so much in wit, or jocosity, as in trenchant sarcasm, mixed with a less severe raillery and banter, employed to make people realise and be ashamed of the follies they had indulged in. A medical man with an immense practice, embracing every class of the community, must see more of the weaknesses of humanity than anyone else, and if he have a keen eye for the detection of absurdity and subterfuge, and an impatience of pretence, he may be led to adopt the line of unceremonious rebuke which some of the more eminent physicians have been in the habit of addressing to their patients without respect of persons. Dr. Grime's blunt, candid way of speaking to rich people and poor, indiscriminately, often reminded me of anecdotes which I had read of the sayings of Dr. Abernethy and other famous doctors whose independent position permitted them to be plain-spoken in censuring fashionable vice, luxury, and frivolity. The roughness of Dr. Grime's language was not taken by those who knew him as a mark of coarseness or vulgarity, for these were foreign to his nature; and his speech at other times, when politeness and correctness were called for, was that of an educated Englishman. He knew his folk, and he had found that a few forcible words, spoken in the dialect and idiom of the people, told more effectually upon the bulk of his patients and neighbours than any round-about address composed of fine society phrases. And he knew that the Blackburn people appreciate vigour and directness of diction more than elegance and pointless circumlocution, and that they liked him all the better for his racy roughness and disregard of the conventionalities.

I was diverted to hear my aged friend Mr. Henry Ward speak of Dr. Grime. They knew each other from boyhood. Both Henrys were full of individuality as

men ever made. Both were despisers of extravagance and display, and were themselves not only preachers, but life-long observers of simplicity and frugality. Both were out-spoken in the extreme, and would tell any man to his face what they thought of him. Both were Methodists, by early attachment and later adoption. Henry Ward was two or three years older than Henry Grime, but he survived his friend over three years. Mr. Ward bore earnest testimony to Dr Grime's honesty and goodness of heart. The latter was Mr. Ward's doctor for many years. They had their little word-sparrings when they met, all in the friendliest spirit. Dr. Grime found fault with Henry Ward that, when ill, he would not adopt the means by which to get well, prescribed by his doctor. Once, Mr. Ward was suddenly stricken down by illness. His son went for Dr. Grime, and wished him to come at once. The doctor demurred. He had other patients awaiting his visit, and he wanted to know why he should take out of his turn a man who would seldom do as he was bid. He had sent medicine to Henry Ward, and when he went next day he had found the bottle of physic full, as sent, and the patient flatly refusing to take a drop of it. So Dr. Grime talked, but I dare say he drove off quickly to see Mr. Henry Ward after all, and put forth his best skill to set him on his feet again. Mr. Henry Ward, on his part, strongly complained that Dr. Grime was quite heedless of his advice. "I told him in John Jardine's shop," Mr. Ward related, "that his constant smoking was shortening his life, and that he was setting an example to his sons of smoking to excess; that his rheumatism was caused by smoking so much. But he would not heed me. He turned it off, saying that smoking did him no harm." Dr. Grime suffered much in his later years from rheumatism in the

head, for which his medical science could not supply an effectual remedy. Thus, between Mr. Henry Ward and Dr. Grime, there was an instance of mutual perversity in rejecting good counsel. The patient would not follow the advice of his doctor, and the doctor smiled incredulously at the advice and warning of his patient. The only point in the doctor's favour was that he could say his advice was sought and paid for, whereas the advice of Mr. Henry Ward, anent the smoking habit, was unasked and gratuitous.

Dr. Grime was the medical adviser of another notable public man—the late Mr. James Beads. Visiting Mr. Beads when he was ailing, Dr. Grime suggested that he should take beer as a table beverage. Mr. Beads objected that he was a known abstainer, and could not depart from his rule. The doctor bade him never mind his total abstinence pledge, and drink beer as he had prescribed. On Mr. Beads still pleading principle and consistency, Dr. Grime grew a little vexed, and said, curtly, "Well, don't send for me, then, if you won't take what I order you."

A medical man who really cares for the health of the working population will wage an unending crusade against dirt, so frequently the accompaniment of poverty, and the breeder of disease. Dr. Grime carried on an unceasing warfare against the personal and domestic uncleanliness of great numbers of those who sought his aid. One day he called at a cottage, on the top of Revidge, to see a sufferer. He found the home filled with smoke and otherwise unwholesome, and he declared he would send no physic there unless they would have the chimney swept and the walls whitewashed. To a woman who went to him with a bad leg, he said that he could see nothing the matter with it, but, being assured that it was very painful, he told the

woman to go home and make a free use of soap and water and then come again, when he could see whether the limb was diseased. His specific for many functional derangements, from which his patients suffered, was a fortnight or a month at the seaside, and I should think Dr. Grime, in his 45 years' practice at Accrington and Blackburn, sent more people to Blackpool than any other man could claim to have done. A poor woman he had attended and almost restored, waited upon him to ask for his bill. Dr. Grime said to her, with a feigned gruffness which did not hide his compassion:—"Whoa towd thee to come here? When I want thee to pay I'll send for thee. Ta' the brass to Blackpoo' an' get some fresh air wi' it."

In April, 1872, Dr. Grime was placed upon the Commission of the Peace for the Borough of Blackburn. As a Magistrate he deemed it dutiful, in some instances, to admonish offenders brought before him, in addition to inflicting the legal penalty. He did so in his plain, direct phrase, which those whom he addressed could not fail to understand. It is said that habitual and hardened offenders like least of all the brief lecture from the Bench which sometimes precedes or follows the announcement of punishment; and prisoners on leaving the dock have been heard to mutter their malediction upon the Justice who forced them to stand and listen whilst he characterised their misdeeds, not so much for their benefit, maybe, as for that of their associates sitting behind in the auditory.

About the year 1885, Dr. Grime, on account of his state of health, disposed of his practice and retired. He removed to Blackpool, and there passed the remaining few years of his life. His wife died soon afterwards. By her he had two sons and seven daughters, who outlived him. Dr. Grime

died suddenly at South Shore, Blackpool, January 11th, 1890, in his 74th year. His remains were brought to Mellor for interment. His grave is in Mellor Churchyard. His eccentricities are remembered as having been not the foil but the peculiar manifestation of some of his most sterling qualities. His skill as a surgeon was quite remarkable. I have heard of some striking examples, exhibited among his well-to-do patients, but these could hardly be appropriately published here.

RICHARD EDMUNDSON, GENTLEMAN.

XXI.—RICHARD EDMUNDSON, GENTLEMAN.

RICHARD Edmundson is described as "gentleman," not because he was, as Longfellow sings of that intrepid Lancashire man, Miles Standish, the Captain of the Puritan forces in New England, "gentleman born," but because the designation "gentleman retired from business" was that by which Richard Edmundson was known during the last nineteen years of his life. Further, because it would make the title several lines in length were I to include the proper description of all professions and trades in which Edmundson by turns was engaged, and all the vocations which he fulfilled, during his long, remarkable, and chequered career. Richard Edmundson was, indeed, a wonderful instance of final success after much fruitless effort to rise out of lowly condition. He was one of the best known of townsmen, in his middle age, and he lived to be the patriarch of prominent men in Blackburn. Very few of those who will read these reminiscences, acquainted with Richard Edmundson, will remember him as anything but an elderly man, for his age was almost equal to that of the century, and he was a sexagenarian more than thirty years ago. That he was generally mentioned, in conversation by Blackburn people, as "Dicky" Edmundson, was in

accordance with the familiar and homely parlance, when natives were in question, and meant no disrespect whatever.

Richard Edmundson was a native of Blackburn, and was born at "Cuckoo Hall," the old house on the further slope of Revidge, near the northern border of the township, on the 9th of August, 1801. His father's name was Joseph Edmundson (son of Richard Edmundson by his wife Betty Brogden), but he died early in the century, when Richard was only eight years old. Within a year, his mother (whose maiden name was Margaret Lathom, daughter of Thomas,) married again, and her second husband soon proved so cruel a step-father that Richard, at the age of nine, took his leave of the maternal dwelling, and assumed the responsibility of keeping himself. His first attempts to do so were disappointing. He went from farm-house to farm-house, asking if they wanted a boy, but all the farmers told him he was too little. The little chap often knew what it was to go short of food, and sometimes he would pull up a few potatoes in the fields, and take them to his lodging for a meal. On market days he would do a bit of work for several of the butchers, carrying out the meat in baskets to their customers, and all he got by way of wages was a little meat at the week's-end. This was hard fare at the outset of life, but young "Dicky" learnt by it one habit: self-reliance. When he had got on somewhat, his mother, who had allowed him to be virtually driven from his home by her husband's unkindness, came to him, and he kept her while she lived.

A townsman in repute for a trade specialty, was old John Edmundson, the inventor or introducer of a snuff of peculiar pungency, or scent, locally known, for many years, as "Edmundson's Snuff." He was great-uncle of Richard

Edmundson, and he had two sons, Joseph and Thomas (I am not clear which was the elder). In a Directory of Blackburn, printed in 1824, occurs, in the list of grocers, the name, "John Edmundson, 62, Northgate." It was in this shop that the celebrated snuff was sold with which the townsmen replenished their snuff-boxes (and almost everybody who was anybody took snuff three-quarters of a century ago). It was even said that persons out of snuff on the Sunday, when the shop was shut, could, by smelling at the keyhole, appease their craving for the article so far as to be enabled to wait until the Monday morning. Some years ago a paragraph appeared respecting "Old Edmundson's Snuff Canister," 112 years old, which was then sold by auction, and Mr. James Hargreaves, wholesale tobacconist, its present possessor, purchased it for £7 10s., though its intrinsic value was trifling. The relic is now 123 years old, and it extends the evidence of local snuff-taking back to the year 1771.

As a lad, Richard Edmundson was befriended, and partially employed for several years, by his uncle John Edmundson, the snuff man, and afterwards by his cousin Joseph Edmundson, John's son, who succeeded his father in the grocer's shop (including the snuff canister and trade), in Northgate. Another relative who took an interest in him was Mrs. Cunliffe, wife of Mr. John Cunliffe, banker, and eventually his widow. She was Miss Margaret Edmundson before marriage, and, if I am not mistaken, was the daughter of Mr. John Edmundson, sister of Joseph, and cousin of Richard. Mr. and Mrs. John Cunliffe had no children of their own, but they adopted a girl named Margaret, (Moore was her surname, I think) the daughter of a poor man in Accrington. She was brought up and educated as a lady,

with expectation of coming into a fortune when Mrs. Cunliffe died. Now, Mrs. Cunliffe liked her relative, Richard Edmundson, a young man who, in spite of early hardships, had educated himself to be a fair Latin scholar and a good mathematician, and had a considerable practical knowledge of the sciences. She would have been pleased to see Richard marry her adopted daughter and she did something towards promoting that object, so Mr. Henry Ward recollected, by creating opportunities for the young man and young lady to meet and walk out together. But Richard Edmundson somehow did not catch on; he made no advances when he had the chance, and subsequently Miss Margaret Cunliffe (as she was now named) became engaged to, and married, Mr. Henry Hargreaves, brother of Mr. John Hargreaves, the Coroner. Mr. Henry Hargreaves was an attorney, but the money which his wife, in due time, had left her by Mrs. Cunliffe enabled him to live in independence of his profession. He built a mansion at Beardwood, and died there in 1872. His son, by the Cunliffe heiress, was Mr. Henry Hargreaves, junior, of Beardwood, who died, unmarried, some years since, and left most of his wealth to public hospitals, including the Blackburn Infirmary. His wise expression of face earned for him, from certain of his associates, the nickname, "Solomon."

Between the ages of twenty and thirty, Richard Edmundson tried two or three occupations, but did not settle to any. For a time, I have heard him say, and Mr. Henry Ward mentioned the same circumstance, he preached to the Baptists in the old chapel at the Town's Moor End. Again, Mr. Ward informed me, he was engaged for several terms as a teacher of mathematics to the students in the

Blackburn Independent Academy, which occupied the good-sized house near the upper end of Ainsworth Street. Also he kept a private school in Union Street, a few doors from the house in which Dr Skaife lived so long, and on the same side of the street. Mr. Edmundson stated that one of his pupils, whilst he taught a school, afterwards became English tutor to the children of the Czar of Russia. Mr. Edmundson afterwards started a night-school for elder students employed during the day, and conducted it for a year or two.

Mr. Henry Ward became acquainted with Richard Edmundson when he was a young man of thirty or thereabouts. Edmundson was then unmarried, and teaching at the Independent Academy. After he gave up teaching, on account of the poor pecuniary proceeds, he made use of a little money he had saved by speculating in fine jaconets, which he bought from other relations of his who were calico manufacturers, namely, Joseph and Thomas Edmundson (cousins of Joseph the grocer, and his brother Thomas), described in 1824 as of Blakey Moor. These jaconets Richard carried with him to London, hoping to find a good market; but when he called upon merchants, in cotton fabrics in London, and showed the pieces, they stared at him, he related, as if they thought he had stolen the goods, and he could not dispose of them at all. At the inn, where he lodged, he met a Jew, who looked at the jaconets, and said, "I'll trade with you for them." He was a trader in the inferior sort of jewellery, and in these wares he paid Richard Edmundson for his cotton cloth. Richard brought the jewellery back with him to Blackburn, but no money. The trinkets were of small value, and Richard was so much the poorer for his London journey. In fact, he was penniless.

Old Joseph Edmundson, whom he had failed to suit about something, now sent for him, and he lived with Joseph again for a short time. A neighbour, William Dewhurst, ironmonger, whose shop was opposite to Joseph Edmundson's, just below the Paganini Inn, Northgate, got into talk with Richard respecting the gas popularly called "laughing gas," which Richard, who had a bent for practical chemistry, knew how to manufacture. Both thought a bit of money might be made out of this "laughing gas," if it were turned to account as a means of producing facial and bodily contortions and grimaces, for a public entertainment It was agreed to try it. William Dewhurst was to find the cash for the venture, and Richard Edmundson the gas, and Richard was to be the conductor of the entertainment. He opened in Blackburn, and took for the purpose the old Music Hall in Market Street Lane, which belonged to Mr. John Fleming. Most of the acquaintance of Richard Edmundson, and other townsfolk, went to see the entertainment, and to be amused by witnessing the effects "of laughing gas" upon his subjects. Mr. Henry Ward was one who visited. The gas was given to anybody in the audience who was willing to inhale it; and a number of persons, under its influence, were upon the stage, laughing "consumedly," and performing grotesque antics and feats of agility. The audience, in turn, laughed at the laughers on the platform, and the entertainment did not flag whilst the gas held out. The brothers James and Henry Pilkington, who were several years younger than Richard Edmundson, were present one evening, and, being on friendly terms with him, allowed him to administer the gas to them. Mr. James Pilkington, Mr. William Henry Hornby, senior, (his former colleague in

Parliament), Mr. R. R. Jackson, and Mr. Henry Ward, were travelling to Manchester in the same compartment, as they often did, when Mr. Pilkington began to talk about his recollection of Henry Ward in his young days, and said that he was "a very mischievous lad." Mr. Ward retorted that "something was known about him" (Mr Pilkington). Mr. Pilkington, decisively, said "No." "Yes," said Mr. Ward, "I once saw you jump upon a table before a large audience, and your brother William tried to do the same, but he couldn't—he was rather to heavy." Mr. Ward then reminded Mr. Pilkington that he performed the feat at Richard Edmundson's laughing-gas entertainment. Mr. Pilkington at once recalled the incident and admitted it. Mr. Hornby and Mr Jackson were immensely tickled at the idea of the demure, sedate, the always serious James Pilkington, capering thus, and laughing loudly and spasmodically the while, as part of a public entertainment, and Mr. Pilkington himself heartily enjoyed the reminiscence. After exhibiting two or three weeks in Blackburn, Richard Edmundson travelled with his laughing-gas entertainment, but it was not a business that could be expected to be constant, although, while it lasted, it answered pretty well. Mr. Ward thought that episode belonged to the year 1833.

The "laughing-gas" speculation just set Richard going, and he took a small shop and premises at the bottom of Callendar Street, where he commenced business as a tallow chandler. He married his first wife, a Miss Talbot, about that period; her father, William Talbot, was a tallow chandler; his shop was at the corner where Northgate and Cannon Street join. Her brother, John Talbot, also, had a chandler's shop, in Salford. Another brother, Giles

Talbot, was with Mr. Gardner Wilkinson, at his warehouse in Ainsworth Street. In his new trade as chandler, Richard Edmundson made rather an indifferent start. The making of candles, like other useful arts, needs practice to attain perfection. Richard's first batch of candles were of deficient illuminating power; so the users complained, and Mr. Henry Ward remembered a saying that a second candle had to be lit in order to see whether the first was burning. Richard Ward was Mr. Edmundson's traveller with the candles, and, when they were found to burn so dimly, he could not contend with the grumbling shopkeepers to whom he sold. So Richard Edmundson went round himself; explained that a miss had been made in the manufacture, but that he had discovered the cause; and promised to make the rest all right. He made good candles afterwards, and not only did he keep the chandler's shop, but it kept him, during a number of years.

By his first wife, Mr. Edmundson had one son, Thomas, born in 1845, and died, aged 23 years, February 5th, 1869. "A nice, quiet lad," Mr. Henry Ward said he was.

Mr. James Livesey mentions one or two little stories, told by Mr. Edmundson himself, of experiences when travelling the district for orders in the chandlery trade. He was going his round, in the district between Blackburn and Whalley, when he attempted to shorten the distance by crossing some fields. He was riding an old nag, and tried to make it mount some fences. The animal was unequal to cross-country work, and it fell with its rider and injured him severely. Eventually he reached Whipp's Inn, at Whalley, much bruised, and with his right arm broken. A doctor was brought to attend to the fractured arm, and, when it was fixed, Mr. Edmundson would have ridden home,

but the doctor would not let him. He was driven to Blackburn in a gig. In spite of the mishap, Richard Edmundson persisted in doing his business as usual, and he wrote with his left hand during the two months his right arm was disabled.

When riding on his rounds, in quest of orders, Richard Edmundson invariably carried a pistol, so as to be able to defend himself in case of attack. Robberies on the highways in Lancashire were more frequent then than now, when persons with any large sum of money about them take the train or tramcar. He had been molested more than once. On one of his days for collecting accounts, he was proceeding on the Preston Old Road between Pleasington and Hoghton, when he noticed two suspicious looking men loitering in the road. On his return, with the money which he had collected—a considerable sum—he expected to encounter these disreputable characters near the same spot, and so it happened. He caught sight of them crouched in a hedge a little way ahead. As he passed them, the men sprang forward, intending to seize the reins of his horse. Mr. Edmundson instantly fired his pistol at the robbers. He did not hit either of them, but, while they were disconcerted by the shot, he spurred his horse, and got past them. They chased him, but could not overtake him, and he escaped, with his money.

Old Joseph Edmundson, Richard's relative, had been friendly until towards the end of his life, when, for some reason, he became colder. A bachelor and a saving man, he had accumulated a good deal of money, and he also owned a freehold farm at Beardwood Fold. He had made a Will in Richard's favour ; this fact was known to Richard, and, accordingly, he had lived for some time in expectation

of being comfortably off when Joseph died. But, unknown to Richard, Joseph had executed a second Will, just before his decease, rendering the first null and void. After his death, the new Will was produced; under it Richard Edmundson got nothing. Joseph had left the Beardwood estate and £10,000 to John Cunliffe's widow, and another £10,000 to her adopted daughter, wife of Mr. Henry Hargreaves; and, besides a few other legacies, he left the residue of his personalty, which I am told was the larger half, to members of the Parkinson family, who had been his next-door neighbours in Northgate, and with whom, in his latter days, he was intimate. Mr. Richard Edmundson was not at all satisfied that the second Will, which disinherited him, had been made when the testator was competent. He therefore instituted legal proceedings in order to have the validity of the Will tested. In the trial which took place, he was unable to prove that Joseph Edmundson had made the later Will when mentally deranged, or otherwise than as a free agent, and he lost the suit. But the Judge, who tried the case, ordered the costs of the plaintiff to be paid out of the estate, on the ground that he was justified, by the circumstances, in seeking to obtain a judicial investigation of the matter. This was the second fortune that might have come to Richard Edmundson had he striven to secure it by keeping in the good graces of his relative, Joseph Edmundson, the rich old bachelor.

In the year 1850, Richard Edmundson took from Mr. Henry Ward the business of hand-loom calico manufacturer, carried on in a warehouse in Paradise Street, and with it Mr. Ward turned over several of his weavers, in Mellor and Balderstone. The warehouse in Paradise Street had previously been tenanted by a Mr. Thompson, and by

old James Pemberton, both engaged in the trade Mr. Ward and Mr. Edmundson went into subsequently. Richard Edmundson dealt in a specialty of the manufacture—the weaving, on the hand-loom, of shirt fronts, made of calico, and bleached. A brisk domestic demand at that time existed for those cheap "dickies." Thomas Helme was one of the weavers transferred by Mr. Henry Ward to Mr. Richard Edmundson. He lived behind Mellor Moor. Mr. Ward had found him in a poor way, and had assisted him to better himself. He was a quiet, clever fellow, and a first-rate weaver on the hand-loom.

At the warehouse, in Paradise Street, Richard Edmundson made a little money. A trading connection had been formed for exporting British manufactures to the West Coast of Africa, importing African products in exchange, for sale and distribution in this country. Mr. G. F. Fisher was the projector of the firm, and Mr. Henry Ward had joined and invested money in the venture. The firm opened a factory at Sierra Leone, and soon established a barter trade with the natives in the "hinterland." Mr. Ward spoke to his partners in Manchester of his friend, Mr. Edmundson, and he was admitted to a share in the business. Thus he became a West African merchant. The trade yielded large profits, but with attendant risks of loss on the cargoes shipped homewards, when the markets for these products were depressed and over-supplied. The firm, in the course of a few years, grew to be one of the most important engaged in the African trade. It was known by the style of "Randall and Fisher," those gentlemen being the principals; and its English places of business were in Manchester and Liverpool. Mr. Randall took charge of the African end, and resided at Sierra Leone. Mr. Fisher

directed the English end at Manchester. Mr. Richard Edmundson was entrusted with the supervision of the depôt at Liverpool, and saw to the reception of in-coming cargoes of gold dust, palm oil, and other imported articles. Difficulties of financing occurred in the early years, when the firm had insufficient capital for its extensive operations. During one season of depression, cargoes were coming which could not be sold on arrival, and they had to be held until the market became active again. Money must be found, and Mr. Edmundson went to all his friends in Blackburn, and borrowed what he could on his personal security. Mr. Henry Ward and Mr. James Shorrock, of Mellor, were his largest helpers. He raised £1,500; the temporary strain was borne; and in a short time he was able to repay the advances. Afterwards, in a literal sense, Richard's "ship came home,' and the sequel of his enterprise as a merchant-trader was that, in Mr. Henry Ward's words "he made a lot of money." It was the first and only lot he ever made. He retired in 1863, with what to him, with his inexpensive habits, was an ample competency. The firm was a few years ago converted into a limited liability company, with a capital of a quarter of a million, and is still carrying on an extensive commerce, with branches at continental ports.

Mr. Edmundson would have been wise if he had been content with his gains as a merchant, and kept out of other trade. But he thought, as every man in Lancashire who has capital unemployed seems to think, until he tries it, that he could make cotton spinning pay. He took, about 1862, the Bank Top Mill, from Mr. Hornby. It was at the beginning of the cotton famine, and the trade was at the mercy of external events. He lost £6,000 in partnership

with a Mr. Brooke, which connection lasted about four years, and the loss would have been more had not Mr. Hornby senior, on hearing of the losses, remitted the whole rent of the mill.

Mr. Edmundson, as a politician, passed through several phases of opinion. As a young man he was associated with the Liberals and Dissenters. In middle life he was an unattached politician and a Low Churchman. For the last twenty-five years of his life he was a decided Conservative, and an active party man on that side In 1857 he stood as an "Independent" candidate for St. John's, and, as such, was elected to serve as Councillor in the Town Council. Independent Members of the Council are not fancied by either party in Blackburn, and the Conservatives of St. John's Ward, at the end ot his first term, would not have Mr. Edmundson any longer, as non-party candidate. He was nominated independently, but he failed to secure election. The votes were :—Tiplady, 478 ; Caughey, 471 ; Edmundson, 246. In 1867 he was nominated for St. Peter's Ward as a Conservative, but was again defeated. His Municipal service was therefore short. It was in 1868 that Mr. Edmundson was most conspicuous as a militant politician. He supported Mr. Hornby and Mr. Joseph Feilden with great zeal. Rumour attributed to him the authorship of a circular addressed to millowners and managers, and other masters and persons in authority, urging them to put forth their influence to promote the return of the Conservative candidates. The document was construed by the Liberals to suggest undue influence, and it was used by Counsel with effect in the petition against the return of the Conservative Members. Whoever drafted the circular, I do not know, (Mr. Gourlay also was credited with it), but I have been

privately assured by all, save one, of the gentlemen whose names were attached to it that they never signed it, nor even saw it until it had been printed and circulated.

A townsman who, as a Liberal, was present at a Conservative Ward Meeting in the bye-election in 1869, after the petition, communicates the following incident, which I insert as showing how conciliatory Mr. Hornby, junr., the present Member, was, at that bitter time, towards political opponents. My correspondent writes :—"During the election campaign by the late Messrs. E. K. Hornby and H. M. Feilden, nominated in place of their fathers, who had been unseated on petition, Mr. Richard Edmundson was a speaker at one of the meetings, held in Witton School. Party feeling ran high, and Mr. Edmundson in this was naturally no exception to the rule. The present Member, Mr. W. H. Hornby, presided over the meeting. Those who remember Mr. Edmundson cannot but have been struck with his original, quaint style of speech. In the course of his remarks, on this occasion, he made some strong animadversions on the opposing party's conduct in regard to the petition, and indignantly exclaimed, with slow emphasis :—"The Radicals are like a snake in the grass." Here the chairman intervened and said he hoped there would be no personalities. In a few courteous and soothing words, Mr. Hornby poured oil on the waters, showing in his early political days that charitable trait which makes him liked so much by friends and foes—the latter political only."

Mr. Richard Edmundson's manner of speech, in public, as the writer of the note remarks, was sententious, precise, and measured. His ideas were clear, and his choice of words and framing of sentences such as we should look for in a speaker who had been preacher and schoolmaster.

He was not generally an excited speaker, but a calm one. In person he was short and small in figure. Always dressed in a suit of black, of old-fashioned cut, and tall hat, set rather back on the head, with silvery hair and whiskers, a reflective cast of countenance, and a slow, decorous step and movement, Richard Edmundson never ceased to look more of the Dissenting minister or the pedagogue (old style) than of the business man, or the opulent merchant he eventually developed into. Thus our early form and feature cling to us in our age, when we, perhaps unconsciously, reflect and recall the fashion of a time that is bygone. The snuff-box and the gold-rimmed spectacles were not wanting, in the personal equipment of Richard Edmundson, to betoken his adherance to the usages of his contemporaries whom he had survived. His domestic habits, too, were curious. Many years he dwelt in the house named peculiarly "Green Gown," beyond Four-Lane-Ends, at the bend of the road where it begins to descend to the hamlet of Pleckgate. There he nightly fired off an old gun as a signal that he was retiring to rest There too, and at West View, Witton, where he lived afterwards and where he died, he drank a glass of beer exactly at eight o'clock every evening, and took no supper. When ill, his remedy was to eat nothing until he felt better, and he sometimes went without food for three or four days. He never would take physic and his opinion of doctors was thus expressed in his last illness :—"Doctors are no good; they just come to look at your tongue, and feel your pulse, and there is 2s. 6d. to pay." He contrived to live 86 years and four months with very little aid from doctors, except when he broke his arm.

A science of which Mr. Edmundson was particularly fond was astronomy. He had two good telescopes, and

one of them was thought a large one for private use. I should have said that the entertainment he travelled with, in 1833, consisted of an exhibition of the camera obscura, besides the "laughing gas." He ground his own glasses for his cameras, and was clever in making scientific apparatus.

At the age of eighty he made a voyage, with Mr. Lucas Edleston, from Liverpool round the north and east coasts of Scotland, and the east coast of England to London, which he much enjoyed, and finished that tour with a journey by rail from London to Land's End and back, and from London, home. After the death of his first wife, Mr. Edmundson married Miss Sarah Darnley, who was not a Blackburn lady. He also outlived her, and, for his third wife, married, about 1868, Mrs. Haworth, widow of Mr. Henry Haworth, who had been engaged in the cotton trade many years. Having no issue by these marriages, and his only son dying in 1869, he adopted as his own the daughter of Mr. Edward Crook, farmer, of Royshaw, Blackburn, by his wife who, before marriage, was Miss Ellen Haworth, one of the daughters of his (Mr. Edmundson's) third wife. She (Miss Mary Ellen Haworth) is the wife of Mr. James Livesey. To her he left the larger portion of his property and money; but he also, by his Will, gave legacies to all the known descendants of both his paternal and maternal grandparents, Richard Edmundson and Betty Brogden, and Thomas Laytham and Catherine Brogden.

I have to thank Mr. Henry Ward, Mr. John Lund, Mr. and Mrs. James Livesey, and Mr. Lucas Edleston, for most of the above facts and incidents in the career of Mr. Richard Edmundson, all, I think, worthy to be recorded. My own recollections of him go back 40 years. He was a

member of the first Free Library Committee, organised in November, 1859, by which I was appointed Librarian, early in 1860. Other notable townsmen on that Committee were Mr. Thomas Clough, Mr. William Hoole, Mr. James Cunningham, and Mr. Charles Tiplady.

Mr. Richard Edmundson died in his 87th year, 23rd December, 1887. He gave a parting proof of his Christian catholicity of spirit by bequeathing a sum of money to every congregation in the town. His remains were buried in the Blackburn Cemetery, and over his tomb, fronting the Church of England chapel, is erected a handsome monument, incribed with his name, that of his third wife, Mary, who died July 2nd, 1877, aged 75; and that of his son Thomas.

XXII.—"WILL." DURHAM, TINMAN, ANNALIST, AND POOR-LAW GUARDIAN.

ANOTHER of the native townsmen of Blackburn of a bygone time whose personality was familiar to the inhabitants, and whose characteristics were decidedly peculiar, was William Durham, sometime a tradesman in the making and sale of tin vessels and utensils, and afterwards an innkeeper in Northgate. I do not recollect that I ever heard anyone refer to him as William Durham, and only on more or less ceremonious and proper occasions was he named Mr. Durham. "Will." Durham was the name he was universally known by. As I remember him, "Will." Durham was most remarkable for his inquisitiveness respecting the inner working of the town's affairs, and his addictedness to, and liking for, the office of censor of the acts and conduct of those who were responsibly engaged in local administration. "Will." Durham picked up, at the "Fishstones" on the Market Place; on Salford Bridge, where the "Salford Bridge Committee" held diurnal meeting to settle the business of the town; in certain barparlours, where different sets of gossip-mongers foregathered in the forenoons to moisten their parched tongues and throats; in public offices and in police courts,

many stray stories, and re-told the tattle he had gathered, to his own coterie, in the kitchen of the Black Horse Inn, of which he was host, or else in the snuggeries of one or two other hostelries which he favoured by casual evening visits. There was no other man in Blackburn, when "Will." Durham was its oracle, who knew so much about what everybody of consequence was doing and saying. This was one feature in his individuality. Another was a captiousness which led him to call in question the procedures of others in town's administration. "Will." Durham also displayed a love of mischief for the mere humour of the thing. The phrase, "having him on," expresses a practice in which "Will." was an adept. It was not easy to distinguish when he was stating an actual fact, or when he was inventing a fable to befool a listener. These were foibles in a man who, in other respects, was a useful citizen.

William Durham was born in the year 1809. His father, John Durham, was a brewer, who became an innkeeper, and kept the Star Inn, Shorrock Fold, between twenty-five and thirty years ago, and, indeed, until his death. "Will." Durham mentions in his published account of Blackburn Parliamentary Elections, that his father was, at the election of 1832, one of the few publicans in the borough who favoured the candidature of Dr. Bowring, the Radical. "Of the innkeepers in Blackburn," he writes, "only two were found at the poll to vote for Dr. Bowring, and one must give them credit for disinterestedness, for each gave the Doctor a plumper. They were the late John Durham, Star Inn, Shorrock Fold; and the late Henry Baines, New Inn, Victoria Street, but then Ainsworth Street." John Durham, in his latter years, was not reckoned a Radical.

His last act was to go and vote for Mr. John Clough, the Conservative candidate in the contested election for an Assistant Overseer, in May, 1854. He died half-an-hour after reaching home from the polling-place. Mr. Tiplady records in his Journal, May 24th, 1854:—"The same day Mr. John Durham died; he voted at the poll for the appointment of Assistant Overseer; was much pressed by the crowd; he died of apoplexy, aged 67 years." John Durham's widow, mother of William, died in 1866:—"August 22, at Birkenhead, in her 75th year, Jane, relict of the late John Durham, innkeeper, Blackburn."

At the age of fifteen, "Will." Durham was apprenticed to the trade of a tinner and brazier. His indenture of apprenticeship, dated the 14th of June, 1824, is "between John Durham, of Blackburn, Brewer, of the first part, William Durham, his son, of the second part, and John Mc.Kean, of Blackburn, Tinner and Brazier, of the third part." His master, Mr. John Mc.Kean, was a Scotchman who had settled in the town. Old Mr. Mc.Kean was a respectable tradesman. His shop, in 1824, was at 27, Church Street. He was a leading member of the congregation at Chapel Street Independent Chapel. Two of his sons, James and John Mc.Kean, learnt the cotton-spinning and manufacturing business, and John for some years had a weaving-shed at Walmer-bridge, Little Hoole. "Will." Durham was apprenticed to Mr. Mc.Kean for seven years, so that he came out of his time at the age of twenty-two, in the year 1831.

Thus "Will." Durham arrived at manhood, and was promoted to be a journeyman tinner, just about the time the townspeople were beginning to be stirred to an intenser interest in national politics by the prospect of the franchise,

entitling them to return their own representatives to the House of Commons. Tory as he was, in the latter period of his life, "Will." Durham first figured in Blackburn politics as an admirer of Dr. Bowring, who, at the Elections in 1832 and 1835, was the candidate of the Radicals. Even when he had been long associated with the Conservatives as a party, and had nothing but dispraise for the leaders and active men of the Liberal party, he had a lingering attachment to Bowring, as I conclude from the manner in which he speaks of him in his "History of the Parliamentary Elections for the Borough of Blackburn," writtten in 1868, shortly before the stormy Election contest of that year. His recollections of the earlier elections are more interesting than his description of the more recent ones. He tells several stories of the rival candidates. This is one. In the autumn of 1831, after the Reform Bill of Earl Grey had been defeated, the politicians of both parties in this town joined in demonstration demanding Reform and the concession to Blackburn of Parliamentary representation.

Mr. William Feilden, Durham says, "took the lead in these demonstrations, and walked in procession to the meeting (an out-of-door meeting on Blakey Moor) arm-in-arm with the late George Dewhurst." "With the extreme Radical appeared, side by side, gentry and clergy, and political rancour and religious bickering were all cast aside to assist in carrying 'the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill.' The motley procession was headed by the tri-colour flag."

The retentive memory of Durham has preserved for posterity that precious bit of oratory, Mr. William Turner's first electioneering speech, on presenting himself, uninvited, as the "Whig" candidate for Blackburn at the

Election in 1832. It is short and sweet enough to bear quotation. Mr. Turner, speaking from a window of the Old Bull Inn, to the crowd in the street, said:—"Gentlemen, they said I wouldn't come; but I am come, and will be here on the day of the election. I'll stand the contest. It rains; it will wet you and will wet me. Good night! Give us three cheers—Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" This speech had its suitable supplement. "Barrels of beer were then rolled into the yard of our ancient Parish Church, the bungs were knocked out, and the people were debauched with drink over the graves of their forefathers."

With respect to the incidents of the second contest in which Bowring stood for Blackburn, in January, 1835, "Will." Durham prints, in his pamphlet on the Elections, a letter which he received from Dr. Bowring, thirty years after, in 1865. Dr Bowring remembered "the kind exertions in my behalf of your [William Durham's] family."

For his first wife William Durham married Alice Dewhurst, daughter of Mr. George Dewhurst, the "father of Radicalism in Blackburn," as he was styled, whose character and life have been sketched by me. Mrs. Durham inherited much of her father's political spirit. She used to say that she had seen her father taken out of his house and away from his young children, whose mother was dead, by soldiers on a charge of high treason, and committed to prison, and that this painful scene, impressed upon her mind, made her a Radical like her father. Whilst she lived, her strong opinions helped to keep her husband on the Radical side, from which, after her death, he was gradually detached. She died in 1851.

As a young man, "Will." Durham set up as tinner. His tinner's shop and workshop were situated in North-

gate. In that trade he continued some years, and he gave it up to become an innkeeper.

The public office which "Will." Durham served for a lengthened period, and by which he was best known, was that of a Guardian of the Poor for the township of Blackburn, in the Blackburn Union. Prior to his election as a member of the Board of Guardians, he had been inquisitive as to the working of the Poor Law, and disposed to spy out and expose abuses of the system. In 1849, I find him in correspondence with the Poor Law Board, complaining of the sum charged for costs on summonses to ratepayers for non-payment of rates, by the Assistant Overseer, Mr. Thomas B. Chadwick. The Assistant Overseer added to the charge of the Magistrates' Clerk, 3s. for information and and summons; 1s. 6d. for obtaining and serving the summons, and put the proceeds in his own pocket. Mr. Durham asked the Poor Law Board if these charges were legal. The Poor Law Board rather took his view of the matter, and seem to have required the Assistant Overseer to discontinue the charge for obtaining and serving summonses to ratepayers.

Another oppressive operation of legal officialism which "Will." Durham busied himself, in the interest of the public, to expose was the merciless mode in which executions used to be carried out by the officers of the old Court of Requests. In 1844, in a letter to the *Preston Guardian*, Mr. Durham communicated the following example of the severe way in which people, sued for small debts, were then liable to be dealt with:—"Two unmarried females, who had seen better days, but unfortunately had become entangled in the meshes of the Blackburn Court of Requests, carried on a small grocery and straw-bonnet business in

Blackburn. Some few weeks ago they had their goods and stock, to the value of £30, seized, under an execution, by the bailiffs of that Court. Being destitute, they sought lodgings in another part of the town In the meantime, the landlord had given notice to the officers for the rent, which so wrought up the passions of the bailiffs, that, reckless of every moral feeling and sense of decency, they, at daybreak next morning, forced their way into the bedroom of the unfortunate women, and, seizing their wearing apparel, left them in a complete state of nudity. They even boasted of their exploit, and how they had, among the apparel, found from £5 to £6 in gold and silver, which they carried off, although they still held the goods Complaint was made before a magistrate, but, as no actual assault could be proved, the case was dismissed."

It was in February of the year 1850, that the incident noticed in my sketch of Mr. Charles Tiplady, in which "Will." Durham was concerned, happened. For a few journeymen tailors, who had a dispute with a Mr. Turner, master-tailor in the town, Mr. Durham had drafted a placard headed "The Sweating System," which he took to Mr. Tiplady and requested him to print. The bill was printed by Mr. Tiplady, and, as soon as it was posted, he was served with a writ for libel. The tailors would have defended the action, but Mr. Tiplady deemed it the wiser course to settle it. For several years after, Mr. Tiplady was liable to be greeted at public meetings with the cry, "Who sold the tailors?" He blamed "Will." Durham for having got him into that trouble.

Some time after his first wife's death, Mr. Durham married a Miss Barker, who had been a barmaid at the Old Bull Hotel. She was as strong a Tory as the first wife

(George Dewhurst's daughter) had been a Radical. "She would have done anything for Hornby," her step-daughter, Mrs. Smith, told me. This second marriage may have been one circumstance amongst others which caused "Will." Durham, the former partizan of Bowring, to turn towards Conservatism. If he had still voted and worked with the Radicals, the new Mrs. Durham would have known the reason why. Another change with which his re-marriage had some connection was the giving up of the tinner's shop and his taking the "Black Horse" tavern. The "Black Horse," during "Will." Durham's tenancy, was the head-quarters of one or two of the artizans' trade unions. The Blackburn humorist, "Jack" Salisbury, satirically mentions the house in one of his "Tummus Carter" letters. "Tummus" and "Peggy,' walking down Northgate together one day, saw "a bonny scolick o' th' 'Black Fleet' abeawt Black Hoss door. 'Aye,' said our Peggy, 'th' Black Fleet loikes Black Hosses" &c. I doubt if "Will." Durham was quite a model tavern-keeper. He was too busy looking into other people's doings to attend very closely to his own. He was fully as likely to be found taking his glass among a company of cronies in another public-house as in the "Black Horse." The "Black Horse" was left a good part of the time to the charge of "Will's." better-half. Durham was also a newspaper reporter and contributor, as well as an innkeeper; and, even if he had not been going the round of all likely places to hear the gossip in circulation, by tongue-delivery to mankind, he would have needed to perform the circuit to pick up items of news for "paragraphs." At the date of "Will." Durham's commencement to supply news to the Press, Blackburn was content to receive its weekly budget of local and district intelligence mainly

through the newspapers of Preston .The *Blackburn Times* had not been started, and the *Blackburn Standard* was a dear Wednesday's paper for the Conservative gentry and principal tradesmen only. "Will." Durham was not a regular staff-reporter. He had no training for such duties. He was retained by the *Preston Guardian* as a paragraphist, correspondent, and contributor of original notes, in the Blackburn district, and this sort of work he could do in a readable style. He had the advantage of an accurate inkling of everything that was transpiring or about to happen. As I have stated, he was, by natural inclination and acquired habit, a gatherer of items of fact and information, and his memory was the capacious receptacle until he could turn it to account as "copy" for the Press. In recollection I see "Will." Durham toddling up or across the street, a little swarthy-visaged man, his "billy-cock" stuck on the back of his head, peering over his spectacles, a knowing expression on his face, with some slips of paper or a note book in his hand, suggesting by each outward mark the exact description of the man —the hunter-up and chronicler of the accidents of the day, of the deeds and misdeeds of the community. Out of his supplementary and irregular occupation as a newspaper correspondent grew his more abiding labour as a local annalist and chronologist. Despite his lack of literary education, or training, his interest in parish records and his diligence in searching for materials to illustrate the history of former periods, enabled him to furnish many a curious and original note to the columns of the newspapers. His well-known "Chronological Notes" was expanded out of his original compilation of a "Chronology of Events in Blackburn, and the Neighbourhood, by WILLIAM DURHAM,"

printed as an extra Supplement to the *Preston Guardian* for February 9th, 1861. It was reprinted as a pamphlet in May, 1861, and dedicated to Mr. Thomas Clough, with the title "Chronological Notes of the History of the Town and Parish of Blackburn." A second edition, brought down to date, was published in 1868, a short time before the writer's decease; and a third edition, revised and much enlarged by myself, was published in 1884. The large sale of these editions betokens the usefulness for reference of the Chronology.

Mr. Durham wrote a number of other Notes on the history of several townships around Blackburn, which are, indeed, but outlines, yet by no means valueless as local historical matter. The fullest portion of Mr. Durham's work was not the ancient section, which leaves much to be added, but that which relates to events within his own recollection. From 1825 to 1868, he saw, as an observant spectator, every important and striking occurrence in and around the town. Those more than forty years constituted a period, in the development of Blackburn, of which future generations will want to possess a clear and detailed record, and this William Durham has largely supplied by his individual knowledge and memory. His "History of Parliamentary Elections in Blackburn" has been previously referred to and quoted. In this tract of 24 pages we possess a vivid and veracious account of every election of Members of Parliament in Blackburn, from the first in 1832 until the eve of that in 1868, by one who participated, on one side or the other, in each of those contests, and personally knew every candidate and prominent actor in these elections. It was published on October 20th, 1868, and a month later the author was dead.

William Durham was a member of the Board of Guardians for 15 years. He was no mere ornamental member, but, as a Guardian, he made himself so intimately acquainted with the working of the Poor-Law in this Union that he was an authority on the subject; and one who wished to know "Will." Durham's share in parish affairs must consult the books of the Union for the years he served, and the reports of the Guardians' meetings in the files of the Blackburn newspapers.

A characteristic of "Will." Durham which least bespeaks our praise was his proneness to disparage other public men, and to regard with distrust those who served the town as its executive officers. Somewhere about the end of 1861, the Conservatives, having at last obtained a majority in the Town Council, held a party meeting to consider their policy as masters of the Municipal Government. Changes had been threatened, and some anxiety was felt among the salaried servants of the Corporation as to what might happen. Mr. Durham knew this, and, with the intention of creating a scare among the staff of the several departments of Municipal Government, Mr. Durham stated, in the presence of company, in the bar parlour of a certain inn, that the Tory conclave had resolved to dismiss every officer of the Corporation who was known to be a Liberal, or who had been appointed by the previous Radical majority. As was intended, the announcement came quickly to the ears of each Corporate official, and it was conveyed to myself, being then Librarian of the Free Library, by one of the officials at the Town Hall. For a short time the Corporate officials who had good salaries and valued their places were rather disturbed, but it was soon ascertained that the Conservative meeting had adopted no such decision as

"Will." Durham had asserted, and had no idea of removing any official on party grounds.

William Durham could relate many unprinted stories and traditions of the town. I remember one he told me several years before he died. We were walking up the road past the "Pot House," to the Workhouse, which Mr. Durham, as Guardian, had kindly offered to show me. There then stood on the right side of the road three or four old weavers' cottages. The "shops" for the hand-looms were on the level with the road, and the living rooms were above; the bed-rooms in a third storey. "Will." Durham pointed to one of these dwellings, as we went by, and said:—"I can tell you a tale about the tenant of that house. Many years ago a weaver lived in it who had already a family of several children, and his wife was expecting every hour to be brought to bed with another. Times were bad, bread dear, and wages poor. The weaver sat in the 'shop' below, moodily plying his loom, as he thought of more mouths to be fed out of his scanty earnings. The doctor had come and the nurse was also there. At length the birth of a child was communicated from above-stairs to the father. He received it without joy, and went on with his weaving. A few minutes later the woman who was attending the mother came downstairs a second time and told the weaver another child was born. The poor weaver had been afraid of twins, and he groaned on learning the tidings that so they had come to pass. Still, he bowed to his fate, and went on weaving. But, presently, down came the nurse again, and informed the father that a third child had been delivered. With a gesture of despair, the weaver sprang from his seat, put on his jacket and cap in haste, and, saying not a word to anybody, quitted the house, and

fled, leaving his wife and children, including the three newly-born, to the charge of the parish. The man disappeared from the town, and was never seen again." It was in the year 1815, and the story finished with the statement that a man, of the same name, had enlisted as a soldier, had been drafted to the army in the Netherlands, under the Duke of Wellington, and was reported to have been amongst the slain at the battle of Waterloo. Such was the tradition of the old cottager on Whinny Heights, as it was related to me by William Durham, nearly thirty years ago. I do not know why he should have invented or imagined such a story, if nothing like it had ever occurred. He could not say that I had been credulous, for I made no remark, and my laugh might rather suggest to him that I regarded the account as one of "Will." Durham's fictions. But he repeated that it was strictly true as regards the three children at a birth in that house, and the absconding of the father.

I last saw William Durham, sitting in a cab, helplessly ill, with someone beside to support him, being conveyed down Northgate to the polling-booth to vote. It was at the Parliamentary Election, on the 17th of November, 1868. The ardent Bowringite of 1832, now an elderly man, was just able to record his vote for Hornby and Feilden. He was not fit to leave his bed, but his wife was so anxious that his vote should not be lost that she consented to his being taken in the cab. Two days later, November 19th, 1868, William Durham died. He was in his 60th year. Charles Tiplady, with whom Mr. Durham had not been on cordial terms, wrote in his private Journal: "Died, William Durham, *a particularly original character;* and as changeable in his opinions as a chameleon in colour. In his youth he was a teacher in Grimshaw Park [Sunday School], and one of the very few left who were my colleagues."

XXIII.—"JACK" BARON, OPERATIVE AND POET.

IT is unaccountable that Blackburn, including the neighbouring rural townships, should have produced in the course of one or two generations out of a peasant class accounted by the Outer World rude, illiterate, unintellectual, and self-characterised as matter-of-fact, so many men who have aspired to the name of poet. If they have not attained the honour associated with true poetic genius, they have displayed a passion for composing verse, and a degree of facility in weaving rhymes, which, in the absence of any education worthy of the name, is remarkable. I have previously noticed two local poets, Richard Dugdale, and William Billington, and of a dozen who, within my recollection, contributed verse to the Blackburn Press, I select a third rhymer, to be rescued for a while from "dumb forgetfulness," by name, John, or "Jack" Baron, who used to be known, in Blackburn, as the "Grimshaw Park Poet."

Baron was the least like one's ideal of a poet in the group of Blackburn bards, unless that be said of Dugdale. With a heavy and not attractive face; full but lack-lustre eyes; a large head in which the cerebrum was less developed than the cerebellum; features not, by any means, finely-

chiselled; and a form and gait only to be described as loutish—the Grimshaw Park Poet was just the average Grimshaw Park factory-worker of the period. In his rhymes, "Jack" Baron describes his mother, his several sweethearts when a young man—"Kitty Law," "Betsy," "Matilda," "Helena," and others—and the lass he wedded, as transcendently beautiful. If it were so, "Jack" himself, so homely-featured, must have matched ill with his female relatives and friends. Something has to be allowed for poetical license. But "Jack" Baron never had the hardihood to picture himself an Adonis. "Uncouth, unkiss'd," says Edmund Spenser, in the *Shepheard's Calendar*; but John Baron's uncouthness, if it extended backward to his youth, did not hinder him from kisses in abundance, as he boasts in his amatory rhymes; for instance, in these lines from a piece entitled "The Farewell," addressed to "Kitty," destined to be "another's" bride:—

> "A 'hag-seed' empoisoned the cup of our blisses,
> Too mean to be ranked with the dregs of mankind;
> And tainted the nectar that sweetened those kisses,
> Which gave such a zest to the powers of my mind."

I must proceed to refer to a few salient facts in the poet's history. John Baron was born on the southern border of Blackburn township, in what was then the detached village of Grimshaw Park (a singular name, for there is no "park" on that side of Blackburn in the memory of the oldest inhabitant, and how the name Grimshaw came to be attached to the locality can only be very doubtfully conjectured). The hamlet of Grimshaw Park consisted, early in this century, of a few cottages, standing on either side of the road above the canal bridge, just where it forks into two roads, the one to Haslingden turning to the

left, and the one to Bury, rising straight up the brow. The old house called "Honey-hole," stood in its fold, with a garden behind, about two hundred yards west of the high-road, and Kemp Street, a street of cottages between the road and "Honey-hole," was built about the date referred to. The next farms to the south of "Honey-hole" were "Top o' th' Coal Pits," and Longshaw. Here was the scene of the childhood and youth of the Grimshaw Park Poet. It was a rural spot then, for the town was half-a-mile away, at the bottom of the hill. John Baron has left in print some verses descriptive of his birth-place, as he remembered it. His father would seem, from the allusion to the fruit trees he planted, to have possessed a garden larger than was usually attached to a hand-loom weaver's cottage, even in the country.

"AN APOSTROPHE TO MY BIRTHPLACE.

Sweet village of my birth! this Sabbath morn
  Invites me to these heights to muse on thee;
Not as a child from thine embraces torn,
  And doomed their foster friends no more to see.
I love thee, though thy rudeness has gone forth,
  As a reproach among the sons of men.
I own I owe thee something more than birth,
  For joys my faithful spouse has brought since then.

* * * * *

These fairy spots, my youthful fancy fired,
  Were dearer still to her whom, arm in arm,
I've led, when Phœbus had to rest retired.
  Amongst the verdant haunts of Longshaw Farm.

* * * * *

Trees of our father's planting I behold
  In many a green inclosure—every bough
Spreads out its apples, with their cheeks of gold.
They loved their rustic homes, their frugal fare,
  Their garden teeming with the choicest fruit;

The red and white rose blossomed everywhere,
  And scarce a bird upon the spray was mute.

* * * * *

Hushed are thine ancient loom-shops, and the dove
  Usurps the place, and many an upturned eye
Shows how intense the meretricious love
  To snare the stranger-bird that passeth by.

* * * * *

Despite the cruel pastimes, barbarous games,
  Each Sabbath eve a goodly circle drew,
Around the hearth to hear our ancient dames
  Tell stories which the credulous deemed true.
Thine were a hardy race, foredoomed to cope
  With fortune's freaks, how wavering and how wild.
Adversity may chasten them, but hope
  Runs on the same, and cheers each perverse child.
Thou hast thy worthies—those whose wealth hath reared
  Yon mighty fabrics, held no niggard hand
To thy necessities, and nobly shared
  Thy woes when famine darkened o'er the land.

* * * * *

Stained with the grossest vices though thou art,
  Industrious village, still I cleave to thee,
For from thy mental darkness yet may start
  A soul whose thoughts shall grasp eternity."

One of the earliest suburban Sunday Schools in Blackburn was the Church of England school in Grimshaw Park, opened not far from seventy years ago. It was founded, I think, by Dr. J. W. Whittaker, Vicar of Blackburn, and was connected with the Parish Church. In that old Grimshaw Park School John Baron received nearly all the schooling he ever had, excepting as a lad at a night school. His teacher was another of my "Characters," Charles Tiplady. When Mr. Tiplady was 62 years old, and John Baron was upwards of 50, an exchange of reminiscences in verse took place between the teacher and scholar. John Baron's

stanzas have the fault of exaggerated expression found in most of his lines. He describes the school as he knew it forty years before (about 1830), when to it came, to be civilised and christianized, the "half-naked savage from the moors." The last stanza reads :—

> "Peace to thy household—health and laurels green
> Bedeck thy brow! For me, alas, even now
> My spirit seeks repose, for I have seen
> Enough of life to loathe it. So hast thou."

Mr. Tiplady's "Answer to John Baron's Retrospective Stanzas" is much more sober and sensible in its language. Here are a few lines from it :—

> "Though once thy teacher, John, I cannot write
> In strains of gifted eloquence like thine,
> Take my poor answer, which I here indite,
> The effort weak, but noble the design.
> If in the morn of life was heard my voice
> In that old school of Grimshaw Park (now gone)
> In training youthful singers to rejoice,
> Well, let us hope those songs will still live on.
>
> Those first impressions of our morning life
> Like happy thoughts our mid-day labours cheer;
> Inspire new vigour for the coming strife,
> And spread some crumbs of genial comfort here.
>
> * * * * *
>
> Thy closing couplet, Baron, I don't like;
> Though sorrow once had nigh o'erwhelmed my soul;
> But fortitude and courage bid us strike
> At black despair, and seek a happier goal."

John Baron's life, apart from his talent for versification, presents few interesting incidents. He did not rise above the lot to which he was born, a Lancashire peasant in a manufacturing town. He learnt to weave on the hand-loom, I believe, but when he grew to be a young man the

factory system was absorbing the cotton manufacture, and he became an operative in a mill. For many years he worked at the Nova Scotia Mills of Messrs Robert Hopwood and Son, and he continued to live in Grimshaw Park, among the comrades of his early days, until past middle age. After publishing a number of his poems in the "Poet's Corner" of one or other of the Blackburn newspapers, John Baron joined, with another Blackburn poet of considerable local repute, who is still living in Manchester—Mr. James Walkden—in the printing and issuing of a small volume of their verse bearing the title "Flowers of Many Hues." This volume has become scarce. It was the only book in which John Baron had an author's share; and it contains but a small proportion of his rhymes. It was published in 1847. He produced a quantity of poetry subsequently. His compositions display some poetical sensibility, and here and there a fine thought is well expressed; but his verses are very unequal, and are marred by numerous defects. It is not easy to pick out four good lines that can be repeated without recognition of some glaring fault in extravagance or in taste. His style is antiquated; he employs the old-fashioned hexameter and longer measures. His strain is melancholy and morbid. In his choice of words, his continuous use of superlatives destroys their force, and repels the reader. His lines are the product of strong passion, totally unchecked by critical judgment, and undisciplined.

"Jack" Baron wasted his gift upon lampoon and satire. In these he wreaked his spite upon any rival rhymster or acquaintance with whom he chanced to quarrel. It was either Billington or "Dicky" Dugdale (I am not quite sure) who once remarked that "Jack" Baron's "forte lay in

eulogising the dead and damning the living"; and a collection of his pieces would yield examples. An exception, however, and a creditable one, is the acrostic on "William Billington" subjoined, which is an unsparing eulogium of another local poet who was then living.

"ACROSTIC.

Well hast thou written, angel-gifted youth,
In Spenser's strain, and sonnetary song;
Lyres such as thine, struck by the hand of truth,
Lull into calm the linguist's blustering tongue.
Inspired by thy sweet page, both old and young
A strong poetic fortress shall thee deem
Majestically reared, high in the realm of dream.

Before thy intellectual gems appeared
In their transcendent brightness 'fore our eyes,
Long had I felt thy verses would be heard—
Loved by the good and treasured by the wise.
In ecstasy I scan each glowing line,
Not envying thee, dear friend, of thy renown.
God knows my heart ne'er fostered a design
To tarnish or malign thy laurel-crown;
On thine own head it rests—nor time, nor place,
Nor powers of darkness can its bloom efface."

The fourth line of the above acrostic—"lull into calm the the linguist's blustering tongue"—is a bad discord; and the last line is also indifferent.

To the *Blackburn Times*, in the first year of its publication (August 7th, 1855,) John Baron contributed "An Exhortation to my Countrymen," written in his best manner. It was during the war with Russia in the Crimea. The following are among the more rhythmical lines:—

"Homes deserted, commerce crippled,
By a rude and ruthless Czar;
Lakes by hostile fleets unrippled
Drink the blood and spoils of War.

Pole and Magyar supplicate us
  To shake of their hideous thralls;
Tell the dangers that await us
  E er each Crimean fortress falls.
From the Ganges to the Shannon,
  Crushed Republics bring your steel:
Let your thunder-belching cannon
  Make the Northern bastions reel.
Let your loud artillery flashes
  On the house of Hapsberg fall,
When you've razed to smouldering ashes,
  Cronstadt and Sebastopol."

"*Loud* artillery *flashes*" is one of those inevitable blots, on "Jack" Baron's copy-book, a moment's care would have avoided.

Like the rest of the Blackburn "School" of Poets, almost without exception, "Jack" Baron, when party-politics were rife, yoked his Pegasus to that car, and wrote election rhymes—squibs, satires, and panegyrics—charged with violent expletives. I must relate, for the first time in print, one story of "Jack" Baron and the Election of 1868, in which, being at that time Editor of the *Blackburn Times*, I was involved. That contest was prolonged for several months; one peculiar feature in it was the number of election songs written and set to music in the interest of the contending parties and their candidates, in the borough and in the county division. "Jack" Baron was classed as "Tory," in 1868, and in that character he had contributed two or three political pieces to the columns of the *Standard* and *Patriot*, in the shape of tributary verses to the excellencies of leading Conservatives. On the Liberal side several Blackburn poets were engaged—Billington, John Walker, Richard Rawcliffe, H G. Graham, Henry Yates, and others, and one or two fresh Election

Songs or Rhymes appeared in the *Blackburn Times* every week. While the Radical poets were speculating how much money "Jack" Baron got in acknowledgment of his complimentary poems to the Tories, "Jack" apparently was envious of the political popularity the Radical poets were gaining by their songs, sung at the numerous meetings of the Liberals, and he may have heard that Gerald Potter was not slow to reward any poet who served his interest in the contest. Anyhow, John Baron took it into his head to send an Election Rhyme to the Radical paper also; and, one day, a piece, bearing his name. and in his handwriting, was left at the *Times* Office, for insertion in the paper, if approved. I decided to print it, with others. Two or three verses of "Jack" Baron's election rhymes, in the interest of the Radical candidate, I quote below, merely as a specimen of the party-political sentiment current at election time in Blackburn twenty-six years ago They are copied from the *Blackburn Times* of September 12th, 1868.

"COME TOLL THE TORIES' KNELL.

A New Song by a Factory Lad.

Come toll the Tories' knell, ye brave, the Tories' knell come toll,
Call down the dread avenger's curse on every guilty soul,
Who made a banquet for King Death of many a member brave,
And doomed the widows and their sons to an untimely grave.
Lords of the forest green, whose deeds have made the people mourn,
Cut down the tree of liberty, and planted there a thorn.
Soon shall the name of Potter be enshrined in every breast,
The pride of Mytton Hall, and of philanthropists the best.
There's not, on all the Tory roll, a name of sweeter sound,
Nor can a soul as pure as his amongst their ranks be found.
Our manly Major Montague, responsive to our call,
Now lays his sword and scabbard down with us to stand or fall.

* * * * *

Then shall the Clergy howl in vain, when Gladstone waves his wand,
And he that sowed in tears shall reap the treasures of the land.
Shade of immortal Eccles! rise; immortal Turner, too;
Spread a black pall o'er each and all of our ungodly crew.
Inflict the curse of Cain upon each slaughter-breathing scourge,
Who fain along our Sister Isle would roll a fiery surge.
Then vote for Gerald Potter and our gallant Montague,
And fight your battles manfully against the Tory crew."

The authorship of these inspiriting lines was avowed by the words written at the bottom of the manuscript:—

"JOHN BARON,
80, Havelock Street,
Blackburn."

But John had not intended this line to be printed, in the newspaper, beneath the rhyme. It was only for the Editor to note, and, if it occurred to him, to communicate to the Liberal candidates, with a view to eliciting their thanks, perchance with a monetary token in appreciation of the poetic effort of so ardent a supporter. But the misguided Editor spoiled the little scheme of the ingenuous Bard by printing his name at the foot of the poem in the Radical paper, letting the Tories as well as the Radicals know how "Jack" Baron was employing his versatile muse. The sudden transfer of the Poet Baron's services from the Tory to the Radical Cause gave rise to some surprise—amused surprise on the part of the Liberals, disgusted or disdainful surprise among the Conservatives—when the paper came out on the Saturday morning. The humour comes in the sequel. I had not been down at the *Times* Office on that morning many minutes when "Jack" Baron burst in, and demanded to see the Editor. I guessed what he wanted and elected to see the poet in the shop, not in the sanctum. I noticed, on confronting him,

that his face was red, and that his large grey protruding eyes were glaring dangerously. In a rasping voice "Jack" wanted to know what the mischief I had been thinking of to print his name at the end of those election verses he had sent? I answered by asking: "Didn't he wish his name to be published? All the other poets who wrote election pieces were particular to have the authorship known." John Baron retorted that I might have known he did not want his name to go in, or else why should he have put the words "by a Factory Lad" at the head where, otherwise, the name should have been? The enraged poet proceeded to curse me in a string of imprecations of the most scathing character, accusing me of having been the means of getting him into a row. Not until he had exhausted his anathemas did "Jack" quit the office. Next week it was rumoured that his conduct, in writing that election rhyme for the Radicals, had been brought up at a special meeting of a working men's Conservative Club, of which Baron was a member, and that a motion censuring him and requesting him to resign had been passed. "Jack" Baron acted too much upon impulse to be consistent. Two or three years after this episode, he sent me a short satirical rhyme denouncing the late Mr. Hutchinson, then head of the firm of Robert Hopwood and Son, for having discharged a few of the old hands at Nova Scotia Mills, who had been there so long that they expected to die in that service. I have mentioned that John Baron himself long worked at those mills, and had often, with reason, praised Mr. Hutchinson for his generosity. But now he changed his tune, and bitterly reflected upon his old master. I suppose he thought that, as the *Blackburn Times* was politically opposed to Mr. Hutchinson, we should be ready

to print his tirade ; but he was mistaken. I did not publish the lines, but I kept them and they are before me as I write. I am sure John Baron himself would have, within a week, wished the thing undone if his onslaught had got into the paper.

John Baron died, of consumption, at the age of 57 years, on the 31st of July, 1880. I am informed that, a few weeks before he died, he destroyed all the political satires he had in manuscript, not desiring that they should be printed, or read, after his death. He was buried in the churchyard of Tockholes Church

XXIV.—MILES BARON, STAYMAKER, ALDERMAN, AND GUARDIAN.

A TALL somewhat large-framed but not stout man, with a slight stoop of shoulder, a forward leaning of body; a downward bend of head and gaze of eye; a slow, measured gait, and an air of preoccupation when walking in the street; a rugged-featured, brown face, with an expression upon it of mingled dejection and sternness—these were the external marks of Miles Baron, whom I add, to my word-portraits, as one of four or five Burgesses sharing the distinction and responsibility of ruling Blackburn, as recognised heads of the dominant party, during a period of eight years ending more than thirty years ago. In those years the Liberals had raised themselves into power, and those who led them were masters of the situation. It was a time of activity and development in this Municipality, when the Town Hall was built, the Corporation Park laid out and opened, the Free Library projected and inaugurated, and the Infirmary founded by one of the Mayors of the period. With Mr. Thomas Dugdale, Mr. William Pilkington, Mr. William Hoole, Mr. James Boyle, Mr. John Rutherford, senior, and Mr. Joseph Turnbull, Mr. Miles Baron was a principal in Town Council proceedings in those days, and he possessed as much distinctiveness of character as any of his colleagues.

The Christian name of "Miles" is a peculiar and uncommon one; but, in three hundred years, I have found no less than eight Miles Barons in the family to which he belonged; so that it was evidently given to him as an old family name. Another Blackburn family in which "Miles" has frequently occurred, as a Christian name, is that of Aspinall. Miles Standish, the Puritan Captain of New England, and a native of Duxbury, near Chorley—a few miles from Blackburn—has made the name distinguished.

The family of Baron, to which Miles Baron belonged, had been established in the township of Tockholes from the sixteenth century, at any rate, and originally, no doubt, were of the same clan as the Barons of Knuzden Hall, very early landowners in Oswaldtwistle township. There was another branch of the stock, long settled in Over Darwen and Eccleshill. The Barons of Tockholes were of the social rank of yeomen, or farmers, who at one time lived upon and cultivated their own small freeholds of land. One held the farm of Wenshead, in Tockholes, in the beginning of the seventeenth century. Thomas Baron, of Tockholes, died in 1595; and John Baron, of Tockholes, in 1627. From these descended William Baron, yeoman, of Tockholes, born in 1704, and died in 1771. Miles Baron, yeoman, of Tockholes, was William's son. This Miles Baron married, about 135 to 140 years ago, Miss Letitia Stott, of Manchester. This lady it was who introduced into the Baron family the Christian name, Letitia, and in later generations there were two or three daughters named "Lettice." Miles and "Lettice" Baron, of Tockholes, had four sons—William, Robert, Thomas, and George; and daughters—Mary, Jane, and Ann. One daughter, Jane Baron, became the wife of Thomas Hoghton, of Tockholes, gentleman,

who was a man of considerable wealth (as riches were estimated then), having had a sum of £10,000 left him by his brother, William Hoghton, of London, a native of Tockholes who went to the Metropolis as a young man, and died in 1806, worth £60,000. Miles Baron, of Tockholes, died in 1774. His widow survived him over thirty years and removed to Blackburn, where she probably lived with her son Thomas. She died in 1805; and, on May 1st, in that year, was interred in the graveyard of Chapel Street Independent Chapel, "Old Lettice Baron, from Blackburn."

William Baron, eldest son of Miles, of Tockholes, removed to Bolton and settled there. Robert, his brother, died a young man. Thomas Baron, another brother, came to Blackburn, and afterwards removed to Manchester. While living in Blackburn, he was a member of the congregation at Chapel Street Chapel, and had, by Isabella his wife, three sons christened there—Miles born 1795, John, and Thomas,—and three daughters, Ann, Letitia, and Jane.

George Baron was the youngest son of Miles, of Tockholes, and was born at Tockholes, about the year 1767. He learnt the trade of joiner, removed to Blackburn, and commenced business in the town as a joiner and builder, sometime between 1795 and 1805. His wood-yard was behind the Royal Oak Inn, in King Street. He married Mary Shorrock, and by her had five children: Robert, Miles, George, Thomas, and Ann. George Baron, the father, died in May, 1835, aged 68, and was buried at Chapel Street, June 1st. His son, Robert, had been partner some years before his father's death, and he succeeded to the business; but his brother Miles took charge of his mother in her widowhood, and took for her, and his unmarried

sister, Miss Ann Baron, a house in Paradise Lane. There old Mrs. Mary Baron died, aged 84 years, about 1849. She fell down stairs, attempting to descend in the night-time, (it was a Sunday night) and was found dead in the morning at the foot of the stairs.

George's son, Robert Baron, joiner and builder, had his place of business in Clayton Street, where he also resided. He was a well-known tradesman. He married Miss Hannah Douglas, sister of the elder Mr. James Douglas, printer, and had sons, William, born in 1825; John Douglas, born in 1828; George, Robert, and James; and daughters Mary Ann, Hannah, and Alice. Mr. Robert Baron (whose wife died in December, 1847) died in October, 1852, buried at Chapel Street, October 14th. William Baron, Robert's eldest son, was, like his father and grandfather, a joiner and builder; his workshop and timber yard were situate on the bank of the Blakewater, below the bridge at the bottom of Darwen Street. He died about six years ago, leaving a son.

A notable member of this Baron family was Mr. George Baron, a brother of the subject of this sketch. He was singularly skilled as a wood-turner, and many of his products on the lathe are in existence, such as cabinets, snuff-boxes, &c., with beautifully ornamented surfaces, lids, and rims, in geometrical designs. Examples of his work were shown at the Exhibition on the opening of the Free Library buildings in 1874. Mr. George Baron kept the Observatory Inn, on Whinny Hill, near the Workhouse. He died there, in September, 1852.

Another of Miles Baron's brothers, was Thomas Baron, of Blackburn, who died in June, 1843. His wife, Ellen, died in August, 1832. He had sons, George, William,

and Robert, and daughters, Jane and Lettice. Miss Ann Baron, the only sister of Miles, died unmarried, at an advanced age, a few years since.

The one member of this Tockholes family of Baron who comes into prominence in the political and civic history of Blackburn is the subject of the present sketch. His son, Mr. John Smith Baron, of Astley Gate, was not sure whether his father was born in Blackburn or in Tockholes, but, amongst my extracts from the Registers of Chapel Street Independent Church, in this town, I find an entry which settles the point, and shows that he was a native of Blackburn. It also supplies the exact date of his birth. The register runs :—" 1807, June 14th. (Baptized.) Miles, son of George and Mary Baron, of Blackburn ; born April 3." The Barons had been Nonconformists for several generations, and, in Tockholes, had been connected with the Old Independent Meeting House. Those who removed to Blackburn attended Chapel Street Church, christened their children, and were buried there. Miles Baron, as a lad, was apprenticed with Mr. Hargreave Wraith to the business of chemist and drysalter. Mr. Wraith's shop was at the top of Darwen Street, by the side of the entrance to the Parish Churchyard, where the business is still continued by Messrs. Booth and Openshaw. The apprenticeship of Miles Baron would be completed about 1828, supposing that he went at the age of 14, and served seven years ; and shortly afterwards he entered into business, on his own account, as a chemist and druggist in a shop in Northgate, on the site of Pendlebury's pork shop. His shop had for its sign the "Golden Horse," with the fore-part of a horse, carved in wood, and gilded, projecting from the front. Miles Baron had been seven or eight years in the shop, and had got a nice busi-

ness, when his marriage was the cause of his embarking in quite a different trade. He married, at Ashton Parish Church, February 29th, 1836, Margaret Smith, daughter of John and Isabella Smith, of Ashton-under-Lyne. Mr. John Smith, who was a baker and grocer, had lived in Blackburn, where his daughter had become acquainted with her future husband, but had removed to Ashton. He had a second business as a staymaker, which the daughter had learnt, and she, being a woman of business aptitude, after her marriage induced her husband to let her commence a business of her own as staymaker. Mr. Baron took for her the premises on the north-west side of Astley Gate. It was an old-fashioned shop, with a frontage consisting of a large "bow-window," flanked on either side by doors. This shop was opened in 1836 as a staymaker's, tailor's, and second-hand clothes shop. The second-hand clothes business was one Mrs. Baron had knowledge of; and her stock consisted of such goods as silk dresses and other articles of feminine attire, which she purchased chiefly in London, where the ladies of wealth and fashion disposed of their costumes after they had been but little worn. Astley Gate had a different appearance in 1836 to its present look. There was no street out of it where Corporation Street now opens. The buildings on that side had the same curve as on the other, and Fish Lane had a narrow opening from the outer side of the bend, with shops fronting to it in continuation of those in Astley Gate, where the *Times* Office now stands.

Miles Baron kept the chemist's shop in Northgate several years longer, but, as the other business in Astley Gate prospered, and appeared to be more profitable and to be capable of greater extension, he reconciled himself to give

up the chemist's trade to which he had served an apprenticeship. The Northgate shop was closed; the "Golden Horse" was taken down, and, with hind-quarters added to it, was converted into a "rocking-horse" for the children to ride. Mr. Baron thenceforward took his part in the tailoring and stay-making business. He set himself to acquire the art of cutting-out cloth for the tailors and, having done so, he for many years undertook that deparment of the work. As for Mrs. Baron, she was the life and soul of the business. Her attention was not diverted from it, as Mr. Baron's was, by town's affairs. In the fitting of ladies with corsets her services were always in requisition, and she could judge at a glance what size of stays a lady's waist would require. The corsets were made, on the premises, by the best hands, and had a reputation for excellence in material and making. Mrs. Baron had, in fact, nearly the whole custom of the town and neighbourhood in the article of stays. Her only competitor was Mrs. Margerison, who had a stay-shop at the lower end of Northgate, but her share was small compared with that of Mrs. Baron. And Mrs. Baron was equally at home in the tailoring branch. She could measure a gentleman, or a workman, for a suit of clothes as cleverly as she measured a lady for a corset. The business grew until it employed from thirty to forty tailors and a number of stay makers.

Alteration of the premises became necessary, and a new front for the shop, of modern character, was a desired improvement. The property belonged to Mr. Joseph Feilden. Mr. Baron had called in Mr. Feilden's steward, Mr. George Stones, who did not at first fall in with the tenant's ideas as to alteration, although Mr. Baron was willing to incur the cost. The steward raised difficulties and objections,

and the matter was kept in suspense. When wives of energetic natures want a thing, they do not readily give it up, and they are apt to overcome the obstacle in a way of their own, of which husbands do not formally approve, but have to stand aside while the wife shows what she can accomplish. Mrs. Baron was not to be frustrated in her purpose of having a new shop front, by the disinclination of the steward. Mrs. Feilden was one of Mrs. Baron's most important patrons. Mrs. Baron was accustomed to go to Witton House to fit the ladies with corsets, and she believed that, with the favour of Mrs. Feilden, she could see Mr. Feilden, and gain him over to her side. Miles Baron, man-like, doubted if the device would succeed, and shrank from seeming to get behind the steward, in a concern which was the steward's proper business. But go to Witton House Mrs. Baron would. She went, saw Mrs. Feilden, who was very gracious, told her errand, and why she wished to see Mr. Feilden. Mr. Joseph Feilden was an affable gentleman, and, when Mrs. Feilden brought him into the room to see Mrs. Baron, he was extremely friendly, and received her statement with all good-will, saying that he saw no reason why the request should be refused. He and Mrs. Feilden, he said, were coming into Blackburn in the afternoon, and would call at the shop, so that the proposed alterations might be explained. In the afternoon the lord of the manor and his lady came in the carriage, and were received by Mr. and Mrs. Baron. When Mr. Baron had not the fitting word ready, Mrs. Baron supplied it. Mr. Joseph Feilden expressed the opinion that the suggested alterations would be improvements, and his pleasure that the business was such as to call for them. The steward was sent for, and, when he found that Mr. Feilden was

satisfied, he was equally compliant; Mrs. Baron had triumphed, and the new shop front, and other improvements, were quickly carried out. Years afterwards, Mr. Baron bought the premises from Mr. Feilden, and enlarged them by constructing a large kitchen, lighted with sky-lights, in the yard. When the street improvement on that side of Astley Gate was effected by the Corporation, and Corporation Street was constructed to relieve the traffic through Astley Gate to Northgate, Mr. Baron pulled down the old buildings, and built the handsome block at the junction of Astley Gate with the new street, including the corner shop and house for himself, and the adjoining shop in Astley Gate, together occupying the site of the structures taken by him for Mrs. Baron's staymaking business 58 years ago.

Miles Baron and his brothers, being Dissenters, leaned to the Liberal side in politics, but Miles was the only active party-politician. He was busy in the contested elections of 1832, 1835, and 1841. George Dewhurst, the great Radical, whose career has been recalled in these sketches, was an intimate associate of Miles Baron. After the town was incorporated, they contested and represented St. Paul's Ward together. But Miles Baron was certainly not so extreme a Radical as George Dewhurst, who was his senior by 17 years. There was nothing of the demagogue about Miles, who had a strong respect for the rights of property, as a substantial citizen and a successful trader should have. But he entered into election warfare with vigour and determination. An incident at the election of 1852, when Mr. William Eccles was attacking the second seat for Blackburn, I particularly remember, having had private cognizance of it. The number of electors being then comparatively few, each individual vote was precious when the party-battle was

keen, and those considered shaky were watched and guarded with the utmost jealousy. The practice of "bottling" voters, whom it was feared would be tampered with, or subjected to undue influence by the opposing party, was resorted to by both parties. One of the electors whom the Radicals, at the election of 1852, made sure of by the "bottling" process, was an old man who was conveyed, the night before the election, no doubt by Mr. Miles Baron's directions, to the house of his sister, Miss Ann Baron, in Paradise Lane. I was then an apprentice in Blackburn, and, as my father's house was in the country, I lodged with Miss Baron during the week, and went home on the Saturday for the week-end. Thus I was a witness to this case of "bottling" an elector. He was a thin grey-haired man, rather decrepit, and wore knee-breeches. He was quite willing to be "bottled"; indeed he appeared to enjoy it, as he was well plied with cordials, supplied with tobacco and snuff *ad lib.*, and served with a good supper before going to bed, and a breakfast in the morning before being taken in a cab to vote, in the custody of two Radical canvassers who reported that they had seen him polled for the right colour. Several of the Barons called to see that the man was safe, and the two or three inmates of the house felt a little excited as to what would happen if the Tories discovered where the voter was concealed, and came in force to fetch him out.

Mr. John S. Baron recollects that, at the same election 42 years ago, his father brought home a group of men engaged in electioneering under his orders, who filled the large kitchen, and were served with victuals which they consumed as if they had fasted long, and with liquid refreshment which they absorbed as the earth does rain after

protracted drought. They stayed late (it was probably on the eve of the election) and took their instructions as to their several duties. The managing men of a party have these things to attend to at election times, and, when clubs and committee-rooms were fewer, they used to bring men into their own homes to be fed and schooled for the work.

I have stated that Miles Baron and George Dewhurst were returned as Councillors for St. Paul's Ward to the first Town Council elected after the incorporation of the Borough, in 1851. They were the last two of the six Councillors chosen for that ward, and were to serve for one year. They had, therefore, to seek re-election in 1852. They were re-elected after a contest. Again, in 1855, Mr. Baron came out, and was again elected. The Liberals had the majority, and could elect the Aldermen, and, on an election of six Aldermen, in 1856, Mr. Miles Baron was one of the number. As Alderman he sat for six years, making his term of service in the Town Council, as Councillor and Alderman, eleven years, from 1851 to 1862. For eight of those years, from 1853 to 1861, Blackburn may be said to have been under the sway of the Puritans. Puritans were its Mayors and acting Magistrates; Puritans mainly its Aldermen and Councillors; Puritans a number of its officials. Messrs. Hoole, William Pilkington, Shaw, Arthur, senior, and Ashburn, were Congregationalists; Mr. Shackleton, a Quaker; Messrs. Miles Baron and Thomas Thwaites, Baptists; Messrs. Turnbull, Rutherford, Boyle, and Johnston, Presbyterians; Messrs Grime and Hirst, Methodists; Mr. George Dewhurst, Unitarian; and others, whom I forget. Even the Police took to reading religious tracts in their spare moments at the Police Office, given to them by Mr. Hoole, who also looked in at the Town Hall, on Sunday afternoons, to see

that the Town Hall keeper and his family, and any police officers or men in attendance, were seriously engaged. I do not say that all the "ruling elders" of the civic body, in these years, were equally strait-laced in their Puritanism. Some of them were too virtuous to tolerate the visible consumption of "cakes and ale," but others were not. Among the latter were Messrs. Boyle, Baron, Rutherford, Hirst, and Arthur. Mr. Miles Baron was not an ascetic in matters of diet. As an administrator, his special interest lay in the town's markets, and he was, during a series of years, Chairman of the Markets Committee. Mr. Baron confined his speeches in Council to plain and curt comments on the proceedings. Shrewd he was, but not talkative. In 1862 he left the Town Council, on the completion of his term as Alderman.

Miles Baron was a Guardian of the Poor for this Union longer than he was a member of the Town Council. During twenty years he bestowed his attention sedulously to that department of local government. For a lengthened period he was Chairman of the Workhouse Committee. In that capacity he spent the whole of Monday afternoon weekly at the Workhouse, and all Saturday forenoon at the Guardians' meeting and the Relieving Office. He was very methodical in his habits; and, when delayed with his own private affairs by public engagements, he would work far into the night to regain the time and to keep matters posted. He went to Manchester by the half-past six train in the morning every week, and had finished his business and was returning by mid-day. Mrs. Baron calculated that Mr. Baron gave an average of twenty hours per week to town's affairs through all the years he had participated in municipal government, and used to remark, as wives of public men are prone to do, that he would have been much better off if he had left the

town's concerns alone, and expended all his time, care, and energy upon his own.

Though brought up a Congregationalist, Mr. Miles Baron, from the date of his marriage, became connected with the Baptists, the denomination his wife was attached to. He was a supporter of a Baptist cause commenced in a room in Ainsworth Street, for which Montague Street Chapel was built in 1843. The Rev. R. Cameron, who came (after Mr. Gray) to be minister of the church, resided several years with the Barons, until his marriage to a Blackburn lady of property. After Mr. Cameron's departure, a difference arose, whilst Mr. Bentley was minister, upon a question of close communion, and a portion of "the church" withdrew, amongst whom were Mr. and Mrs. Baron. Mr. Cameron returned to preach to the seceders, and Mr. Baron built for their use a meeting-room in Feilden Street. The new place grew, while the older one decreased in number of worshippers, and at length a reconciliation of the two sections was brought about, and they re-united to compose a stronger church, with Montague Street Chapel for its place of worship.

Reverting, for a moment, to Mr. Miles Baron's business, Mr. John S. Baron, who succeeded to it and has continued it on the old ground, believes that his father was the first to introduce the sewing-machine into Blackburn, about the years 1855-56. It was a "Lancashire" machine. The prejudice against it was so strong among the journeymen tailors that, in order to discredit the machine, or to compel Mr. Baron to abandon its use (although the tailors were paid the same amount for making a pair of trousers as before), they cut the stitches (the chain-stitch) in one or two places while the clothes were in their hands, and when they came to be worn, the whole seam came loose. It was only after

much conflict and annoyance to the master tailors that the workmen's resistance to the employment of the sewing-machine was overcome.

Mr. and Mrs. Baron retired from business in 1868, and transferred the shop, stock, and connection, to their second son, Mr. John S. Baron. They lived a while longer in the house in Corporation Street, behind the shop, and then removed to another house at the lower end of Fish Lane. In that house Mr. Baron and his wife lived about fifteen years, until the death of Mr. Baron, on the 1st of January, 1885. He had nearly completed his 78th year. Mrs. Baron survived him five years, and died, also in her 78th year, on the 22nd of January, 1890, at the residence of her daughter. South Norwood, near London.

Mr. Miles Baron used to say that when his father, George Baron, died, leaving little property, his elder brother, Robert, took what there was, and all that Miles inherited was a hammer. This he took possession of and told his brother he would fell him with it, if he touched it. He, nevertheless, made his way in the World, and realised a competency before old age came on, thanks largely (as well as to his own ability and exertions) to the skill, address, and influence of Mrs Baron, who was a woman of wonderful intelligence, vivacity of manner, bright disposition, and agreeable conversation. The family tendency of the Barons is to taciturnity and gruffness, and Miles Baron showed this to some extent, but Mrs. Baron was the reverse of that in her sprightly ways and her ready expression. She was a zealous promoter of those works of Christian philanthropy in which women have taken the lead.

Mr. Miles Baron had four sons—George William (now of Liverpool, building surveyor), John Smith (who continues

his father's business in Astley Gate, Blackburn), Miles, and William Henry; and two daughters—Mary Jane (married Mr. Stevenson, and is dead), and Isabella (wife of Rev. John Chadwick, Baptist Minister, of South Norwood, London).

JOHN OSBALDESTON'S COTTAGE.

XXV.—JOHN OSBALDESTON, WEAVER AND INVENTOR.

I DECIDED to conclude this series with an account, embodying such particulars of the personal history, character, and work, as can be gathered of John Osbaldeston, a native craftsman, mechanician, and inventor, who belonged to a generation of which he was one of the last survivors, and who died, at a great age, thirty-two years ago. Hitherto no inventor had been included in my list. Although John Osbaldeston was strongly believed, by those of his contemporaries who had the best opportunity of observing and estimating his talents, to have been a man of singular inventiveness and contrivance in the branch of mechanical construction applied to textile manufactures, no biographical memorial of him has, until now, been written, beyond a few lines of obituary notice in the local newspapers at the time of his death, and a brief mention in my own *History of Blackburn.* The materials for even a brief biography of this humble inventor's life are scanty, and leave the first forty years of it almost a blank; but inquiries by my friend Mr. Mosley, and myself, have brought to light some interesting incidents and traits of the inventor.

John Osbaldeston, who was the undisputed inventor of improvements in the power-loom for cotton weaving (and

who claimed, with apparently good ground, to have been the suggester of still more valuable and successful improvements in the loom and other machinery used in the weaving branch of the cotton manufacture), was a native of Blackburn, and was born in the latter end of the year 1780. I have looked up the baptismal register at the Parish Church for that and two or three preceding years, and find that only one John Osbaldeston occurs as being baptized at that period, and we may take for granted that this was the future inventor. The entry runs :—

"1780. December 8. (Baptized.) JOHN, son of John and Alice Osbaldeston, of Blackburn."

John Osbaldeston, the son, would be born a few days, or, perhaps, two or three weeks, before the date of his baptism. His father's birth would go back to the middle of last century. A living member of the family has stated a family tradition that its descent was from the ancient stock of Osbaldestons, lords of Osbaldeston manor, whose seat was Osbaldeston Hall, on the banks of the Ribble, in this parish; one of the great territorial families of Lancashire. And, so far from the claim being improbable conjecture, it is a very probable assumption. The surname of Osbaldeston could have been derived, originally, in no other conceivable way. Some of the younger members of the house of Osbaldeston, of Osbaldeston, did settle in Blackburn, Mellor, and other townships, not far from the family's earliest seat. They became poor, and fell into social insignificance, as some members of every important family must and will in process of time. John Osbaldeston, father of my subject, is not described in the register as "yeoman," "chapman," or by the name of any trade he followed. So I conclude he was a cottager in the town and, almost

certainly, a weaver on the hand-loom. Of him nothing is remembered; but it is not unlikely that he lived in the northern outskirt of Blackburn, near Shear Brow, where the son dwelt many years in middle life, and until considerably advanced towards old age. The year of the father's death, I am unable to ascertain.

John Osbaldeston, the inventor, is known to have spent the greater portion of his working life in plying the hand-loom. He must have married pretty early, for one of his daughters became a wife some sixty years ago. His wife's name was "Betty" (or Elizabeth). She was living fifty years since, but died a long time before her husband. The children included two, or three sons, and several daughters. One son was named George Osbaldeston. Of the daughters, Betty married Elijah Burton; another married Hugh Eccles; and a third married a man named Holden.

At the steepest part of Shear Brow, where the old highway, from Blackburn northward to Ribchester, ascends the hill, and where the occupation-way formerly passed up to Shear Bank Fold, on the left hand as one goes up the road there used to stand a cluster of small tenements, built of brick. These dwellings were of considerable antiquity—the oldest of them may have existed two hundred years or more. Some have been recently demolished, but a couple of short rows are yet standing. On the map of 1822 the hamlet is marked "Card Fold"; and, on the modern maps of the borough, the name is varied to "Court Fold"; but old townsfolk call a part of this group of old houses "Paddock." In one of these cottages John Osbaldeston lived—during the period in which his inventive faculty was being most actively exercised—when he was aged from forty to sixty-five years, from 1820 to 1845.

Between 1820 and 1825, the improved loom, constructed of iron instead of wood, a compact machine designed to be worked in numbers in factories and driven by steam-power, was introduced into this town and other seats of the cotton manufacture, and was beginning to displace the old clumsy, wooden hand-loom. The "power-loom" did not attain perfection at once. The loom with which we are now familiar is the result of the application of scores of clever contrivances, many of them patented, and several have brought much wealth and fame to the men who, if they did not in all cases themselves conceive the idea of the improvements, had the means and appliances to make them effective. John Osbaldeston saw the "dandy" hand-loom and the "steam-loom" come into vogue, and he was incited to exercise the mechanical gift he undoubtedly possessed in overcoming some of the difficulties experienced in the working of the power-loom, in its first imperfect form. Other minds, of similar bent, were busy upon those problems; and, where a number of ingenious and alert mechanicians were at the same time watching the working of the new power-loom, and noticing its defects, it was to be expected that the discovery, by one or another, of methods to overcome the drawbacks to the adoption of a loom driven by steam-power, would be almost simultaneous. Inevitably, too, the men who, besides having the skill to apply brilliant ideas to mechanism, commanded the money wherewith to establish founderies and machine-shops and to fit them with necessary plant, and could afford to make experimental machines and models, gained all the advantage of their own inventions, and also of the suggestions of the humbler inventors, who could not proceed far in the material embodiment of their discoveries.

John Osbaldeston was one of those peasant-inventors whose poverty forbids them reaping the harvest of their diligent study and bright intelligence. For several years, prior to 1840, John Osbaldeston expended all his thought and most of his time in attempting to apply to the power-loom a self-stopping motion, and several other much desiderated improvements. He had two of the ablest men in Blackburn, or in Lancashire, to compete and contend with, if he ventured to put himself in competition for the prizes of mechanical invention. I mean, James Bullough and Edward Kenworthy. They were both employed at the Brookhouse Mills, and had the free use of the mechanics' shops there in the making of all the machines or parts of machines they required for testing the effects of new motions. John Osbaldeston in his cottage had nothing to help him, except the simple small bits of mechanism which he could put together with his own hands, working with one or two common tools. It did not follow that Kenworthy and Bullough, purely as inventors, were superior to Osbaldeston, because they beat him out of the field, and left him to pine in penury while they prospered apace.

John Osbaldeston always asserted, and a number of his neighbours stoutly upheld his claim, that he was the real contriver of the weft-fork, loose-reed, and roller temple, parts of the power-loom of to-day reckoned of the utmost service, with which the name of Mr. James Bullough is also associated as an inventor, and Messrs. Bullough and Kenworthy as patentees; and of the "slashing machine," the prototype of the taping machine now in use. I am not competent to adjudicate as to the respective shares of James Bullough and John Osbaldeston, in these excellent inventions; but I am glad to recall to public recollection

the fact that John Osbaldeston, more than fifty years ago, was labouring, perhaps with equal originality of conception, and surely with no less perseverance, to that same end, in the interest of the great industry of this district of Lancashire—the perfecting of the power-loom, and subsidiary machinery—and, at least, a part of the debt of the community was due to him for the results achieved. Yet Messrs. Kenworthy and Bullough became partner, in the one case, founder in the other, of great firms, and died in honour and competence, whilst he lived out a much longer life in indigence, and died in a workhouse. The moral of the contrast is that a mechanical inventor, in order to ensure to himself the profit of his inventions, must also be an apt, enterprising, and pushing man of business. That additional talent is one with which Nature has endowed few men of inventive genius; any more than she has made the greatest poets and authors equally capable of becoming enterprising and successful publishers of their own books. The two faculties are totally distinct.

A friend of mine, Mr. Joseph Mosley, has interested himself deeply in collecting what can now be gleaned, from surviving persons, old comrades, and descendants, of the career and personality of this unrequited and obscure but meritorious inventor, and his notes have supplied a good part of the materials for the present sketch of John Osbaldeston. I have also to thank Mr. Robert Snailham (himself a character devoted to the science of floriculture) for interesting reminiscences of Osbaldeston.

Robert Snailham said he got to know John Osbaldeston through one of his daughters marrying Hugh Eccles, who was a plant-grower at "Paddock," in Shear Brow. At that time (over fifty years ago) there were many

plant-growers at Shear Brow; some had small greenhouses and garden-plots, others had only their cottage windows. They grew all kinds of greenhouse plants then in vogue, and chiefly pelargoniums, calceolarias, and fuchsias. "Bob" Snailham lived in Blakey Street, Snig Brook, in an old-fashioned house, with a wide window on the ground-floor, where he had a fine show of plants. In the cottage of Hugh Eccles, John Osbaldeston's son-in-law, which was near the cottage of Osbaldeston, Snailham often saw and talked with the inventor. He was "a little man, full of talk," Snailham remarked; "but always talking about machinery, never about flowers" (Robert Snailham's hobby). He "was not so sharp to look at, or to hear talk"—he spoke broad dialect, and had a rather thick utterance—"made a big mouthful" of his words, was Robert Snailham's expression. John Osbaldeston would sit in the chair, talking about his inventions, and, with a few bristles pulled out of a brush and tied together with a little lever attached, he would show how his weft-stopping contrivance would work. He "looked a very poor man"; and he "looked old, too" (he would be about sixty years old at that time). Mr. Snailham heard folk say that "Jem Bullough was often about" Osbaldeston in those days, and so was Kenworthy. John Osbaldeston had been a hand-loom weaver, but he no longer worked much at that.

The weft-fork was patented by James Bullough and Edward Kenworthy in 1841. A circumstance of interest, mentioned by Mr. Robert Snailham, was that when the weft-fork was first attached to looms, in 1842 and 1843, each weaver who wove upon looms with that improvement had to pay 9d. a loom to the factory master, as a contribution towards the cost of applying the patent. Most adult weavers

on the power-loom had then two looms to tend, so that the charge for the weft-fork was 1s. 6d. per week, stopped out of the weaver's wages. Robert Snailham himself paid that sum, when the weft-fork was introduced at Messrs. Feilden and Jackson's mill, where he was employed. That would be about the year 1843. Adam Bullough, brother of James Bullough, the patentee, was manager of the above-named factory, and introduced the patent early. The weavers did not at all like a charge of 9d. a loom for the benefit of the weft-fork, and they repeatedly tried to get rid of the payment. At last, after a few years, when trade was unusually profitable, they made a strong effort, and obtained the remission of the charge.

Respecting one of John Osbaldeston's cronies in his inventive period, Mr. Mosley notes:—"John Osbaldeston was an intimate friend of Stephen Walsh, who resided at 174, Duke's Brow. The latter was a well-known 'gater,' as known in the hand-loom days, and was invariably sent for, throughout the country districts, to 'gate,' or start, new designs of cotton cloths of difficult patterns. At times he was sent for as far as Bolton to work out new fancy sorts. Eliel Walsh, his son, remembers his father and John Osbaldeston comparing opinions about the hand-loom trade, and he well recollects seeing John Osbaldeston bringing his model slays for the 'loose reed' to his father's home in Duke's Brow, to talk over his new ideas. They used to have very long talks together." When he was shaping his design for the "slashing machine," James Bullough was frequently in his company, and Thomas Butterworth, of Higher Bank Street, is the authority for the story that, one day, when James Bullough was sitting in the house, questioning John Osbaldeston on this invention, and when, at length, he clearly

understood the operation of it, and saw its great value, "he jumped up, throwing up his arms and legs until he nearly punched the ceiling," exclaiming "I have it!" Stephen Walsh died on the 16th of December, 1864, aged 54 years. His son, Eliel Walsh, mentions that one of John Osbaldeston's grandsons was a soldier in India with himself, during the Mutiny in 1857-1858.

Peter Eaves, of Duke's Brow, who was well acquainted with John Osbaldeston, informs Mr. Mosley that he "was slightly built, about 5 feet 4 inches in height, and had a thin, clean-shaven face. His manner was quiet and unobtrusive." One of the largest hand-loom manufacturers in the district, fifty years ago, was Mr. John Haslam, of Bolton and Blackburn. His Blackburn warehouse, the premises in Ainsworth Street, is now in the occupation of Mr. Thomas Barton. Peter Eaves served Mr. John Haslam from boyhood, and for many years, as his book-keeper. He remembers John Osbaldeston calling at the warehouse to have chats with his friend, Stephen Walsh, another old servant of some twenty years' standing, and that he used to tell of the visits he had from Mr. Kenworthy and Mr. James Bullough. John Osbaldeston was susceptible to the seduction of a good glass of beer, which, no doubt, had the effect of making him talk without restraint of his projects in invention, and his weakness in this particular was not lost sight of by interested parties.

A grand-daughter of John Osbaldeston, named Betty Walsh (her father's name was Holden), was visited by Mr. Mosley, in quest of information about the inventor. She lives at 28, London Road. She is 56 years old, and was christened "Betty" after her grand-mother. She remembers her grand-parents very well. She describes her grand-

father, John Osbaldeston, as being, when she knew him, "a white-haired old man, who used to tell her stories of his being taken to the Old Bull Hotel, by the Bulloughs and Kenworthy, in the days when his inventive faculties were at work." Mr. Mosley obtained, through this granddaughter, a photographic portrait of John Osbaldeston. It appears to have been copied from a daguerreotype, and is faded. The face is rather long, and the cheeks somewhat sunken, but the high forehead, strongly-defined eyebrows, and thoughtful grey eyes, impart much character to the countenance. The expression is serious and meditative, as of a mind possessed by some absorbing idea—precisely such an expression as one would look for in the face of an inventor. The hair is white, thin on the top of the head, and somewhat long. The dress consisted of black coat and vest of old-fashioned cut, and black stock about the neck, above which the shirt-collar is just visible. The portrait would be taken when the inventor was at least 75 years old.

One of John Osbaldeston's sons was named George Osbaldeston. A fact which goes to confirm the statement that the father held intercourse respecting improvements in the power-loom with Mr. Kenworthy and Mr. Bullough, when they were bringing out their famous patents, is that his son George was taken into employment at the Brookhouse Mills, where Mr. Kenworthy was a partner, and Mr. James Bullough was engaged. George Osbaldeston was an intelligent workman, and was promoted to be an overlooker in the weaving department. Had he lived he might have taken a still higher position in the mills, and his father might thus have indirectly profited by his relations with Mr. Kenworthy. Robert Snailham said that George Osbal-

deston was physically not strong, and he died before middle age John Osbaldeston's grand-daughter, Betty Walsh, "remembers that George Osbaldeston, son of the inventor, was an overlooker or under-working manager at Hornby's Brookhouse Mills, and, at the time of the Great Exhibition in London, in 1851, he 'gated-up' at Brookhouse Mills the model loom which was sent to the Exhibition. It was intended that he should have gone to work the loom at the Exhibition, but his health failed, and he died not long after. In his place Henry Livesey, then a working weaver, was selected to work the loom at the Exhibition of 1851, and he is now the head of the firm of Henry Livesey, and Co., Machinists, of Blackburn."

No one of John Osbaldeston's children is now alive. Betty Walsh states that his last surviving daughter died in 1892. There are grand-children and great-grand-children living in the town, and elsewhere.

During the last twelve, or fifteen, years of his long life, the unfortunate inventor was in sadly necessitous circumstances. He had made no money out of his inventions, and was no longer able to work for his subsistence. His surviving children had married and settled, but were poor. When he gave up house he went to live with the daughter who had married Elijah Burton, a mechanic, at 67, Duke's Brow. There he lived some years, until he was conveyed to the Workhouse. This (in Duke's Brow), being the only tenement which can now be identified as one of the homes of the inventor, Mr. Mosley had it photographed (by Mr. Bibby), and from this photograph the engraving has been made. The cottage is situated at the top of Duke's Brow, on the west side, and is the one nearest to the town of the block of old dwellings there.

John Osbaldeston took out letters patent, for several of his improvements of the power-loom, in the year 1842. Were there no other proof of his ingenuity, directed to every part of the mechanism of the loom, than the description this patent furnishes, the evidence would be ample. The specification is a lengthy and elaborate one, with several drawings accompanying it, showing the Blackburn power-loom as it was fifty-one years ago. It is dated August 12, 1842. The patentee is described as "John Osbaldeston, of Blackburn, Metal Heald Maker," and the nature of the inventions as "Improvements in Looms for Weaving." These improvements are twelve in number, and are, in the preamble, thus shortly indicated :—

The invention relates (1) to a mode of applying springs to the back of the slay of a loom, so that the strength of beating up the weft will depend upon the elasticity of the springs at the back of the slay. (2) To the mode of applying springs between the slay and crank-shaft of a loom, and thereby obtains an elastic beat-up to the weft. (3) To a mode of stopping the beat-up of a loom when the shuttle is not thrown into the shuttle-box, and consists in applying levers on vertical axes under the shuttle-box. (4) To a mode of stopping the loom when weft is not properly supplied, and consists in connecting a spring top so as to be struck directly by the slay with the fork for throwing the strap off between the fixed drum or pulley. (5) To a mode of winding up the cloth as it is produced. (6) To a mode of giving off the warp from the warp-beam. (7) To a mode of regulating the giving off of the warp from the warp-beam. (8) To a mode of drawing off and delivering the warp from the warp beam. (9) To a mode of arranging the driving parts of the loom. (10) To a mode of constructing and

working temples. (11) To an arrangement of revolving temples, by which the cloth is not only held, but stretched out as it is made. (12) To a mode of arranging parts of a shuttle, and applying a cutter to cut the shoot when any of the ends of a warp may be broken, hang down, and become entangled with other of the warp threads.

Mr. Thomas Clough, of whom it must be put on record to his honour that he delighted in practically encouraging ability of any kind displayed by poor men, befriended John Osbaldeston in his last days, when he stood in much need of help. He was over eighty years old, and had become feeble, when Mr. Clough advised him to consent to be taken to the Workhouse, and promised him that he should have exceptional treatment there. He accordingly quitted his daughter's cottage, and went to the Workhouse. Being a man in authority on the Board of Guardians, Mr. Clough had sufficient influence at the Workhouse to obtain for the aged inventor such indulgences as did not unduly interfere with the rules of the House, and to see that he was made comfortable. I therefore think that, whilst it was pitiable that a townsman so clever, and one who had done so much for the town's greatest industry as John Osbaldeston, should end his career among paupers, yet he was better off in the "House" than he would have been outside; for the Cotton Famine soon afterwards set in. Other friends of the inventor, amongst the Guardians and their officers, were: Mr. William Durham, Dr. Grime, the Union Surgeon; Mr. Brennand, Deputy Clerk; and Mr. Summersgill, Governor of the Workhouse; and when the old man died, in his 82nd year, on the 18th February, 1862, these admirers of John Osbaldeston agreed that he should not have a parish funeral, but should be buried decorously as an honourable citizen.

Mr. Clough, Dr. Grime, and Alderman John Baynes, I think, jointly defrayed the expenses of his funeral, which may be described as a public one; and the then Vicar of Tockholes, Rev. C. Hughes, made a gift of the grave-space in Tockholes Churchyard The funeral took place on February 22nd, and several of those already named attended the funeral. The newspaper account states that "the wishes of the deceased were consulted in the selection of a spot for his grave. He asked that he might be buried near to a tree, and at the foot of a tree he takes his last sleep." After the burial service, conducted by the Vicar (Mr. Hughes), the gentlemen who had gone to Tockholes to pay their tribute of respect to the deceased, spent a short time in refreshment at the village inn, and "appropriate addresses were delivered on the event of the day. The life, services, and fate of Mr. Osbaldeston were touchingly dwelt upon." The Rev. C. Hughes said "he esteemed it a great honour that his Churchyard had been selected as the depository of the remains of so distinguished a man as John Osbaldeston"; adding that the "subject of a monument had been mentioned; and he assured the gentlemen present that every facility should be given to them in carrying out the design."

The late Mr. John Baynes, of Blackburn, in one of his "Two Lectures on the Cotton Trade," delivered and published in 1857, referred to John Osbaldeston's contributions to the perfecting of the power-loom, in the following passage. Mr. Baynes was, in his day, an authority on the cotton manufacture. He said:—"To Mr. John Osbaldeston, I believe, is due the honour of discovering the important principle of breaking the concussion of the loom, and inventing an improved temple. He also originated many

of those inventive appliances so essential to adapt the power-loom for weaving fancy goods ; but he has not been successful in securing any pecuniary advantage to himself, and is an illustration of the fact that not every benefactor of his species meets with the reward due to his merits. As he is far advanced in years [the inventor was living when Mr. Baynes's lectures were given], I trust the efforts of his friends, and the subscription set on foot, will raise sufficient to keep him in comfort for the remainder of his days." The hope of Mr. Baynes was not fulfilled.

This sketch—originally published in the local Press—revived interest in Osbaldeston, the Inventor. His hard life and the pitiful pathos of his closing years would seem to suggest that some reparation be made at this late hour. I think the people of Blackburn ought to memorize the man in some way.

NOTES.

Mr. Abram, had he lived, would have striven to arouse interest in a Memorial to Osbaldeston. It was his expressed determination. He mentioned the matter, informally, to several. Since Mr. Abram's death there are signs of movement in the matter, one suggestion being a window in Tockholes Church, in the graveyard of which the Weaver-Inventor was buried.

* * *

One Chapter in "Blackburn Characters" remains unwritten. Mr. Abram had intended to include a sketch of the late Mr. Henry Ward. Materials and memoranda had been collected, but the article was unwritten when Mr. Abram died. No one could write of Mr. Ward in Mr. Abram's way ; it was determined, therefore, to omit this last intended Chapter.

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